Dorothy Parker and Sylvia Townsend Warner

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

June 27, 1939

"The Insects" by Maxim Gorky

A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED STORY

WPA or Back to Breadlines?

THE FIGHT AGAINST DESTITUTION

Save Our Schools

AN EDITORIAL ARTICLE

The Araquistain Junta

BY JOSEPH NORTH

Cartoons by Gropper, Richter, Gardner Rea, John Heliker, Hugo Gellert, Maurice Becker, Fitzpatrick, Ajay, John Groth, Birnbaum, Anton Refregier

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BE[illegible]N OURSELVES

[illegible]e has been buzzing with [illegible]ect reservations for NM's benefit performance of the sprightly refugee revue, *From Vienna,* at the air-cooled Music Box theater Thursday, June 29. Martha Pearse at CAledonia 5-3076 will take your reservation at 83 cents, $1.10, $1.65, and $2.20. The review, presented in the brand-new and amazingly good English of the refugees, is the product of members of the famous Viennese little theater group, Wienerkleinkunstbuehne, and will include musical numbers, satires, and a one-act play, under the direction of Herbert Berghof, formerly associated with Max Reinhardt. A distinguished group of American theater people have sponsored and assisted in the production. Mr. and Mrs. George S. Kaufman, Sam H. Harris, Max Gordon, Irving Berlin, Al Jolson, and Moss Hart, are among the sponsors. Charles Friedman, co-author of *Pins and Needles* is coordinator of production; Hassard Short has done the lighting; Donald Oenslager the sets; and Irene Sharaff the costumes. Eventual proceeds go toward refugee relief. We will continue to take orders for NM's performance by telephone or mail to 461 Fourth Avenue, NYC.

"Coin' cards are anti-summer-slump insurance."

This is the tenor of a goodly number of friendly letters we have received in the last few days, all of them enthusiastically declaring that this is an easy and practical way to collect money for the NM Campaign. To date we have received a total of $22,980 towards our $30,000 goal. Bruce Crawford sends in $5 with his coin card and a stirring appeal to readers to support NM. Read Crawford's appeal. It tells of our financial urgency in burning words. See page 19.

The League of American Writers is holding a poetry symposium on Monday evening, June 26, at the George Washington Hotel in NYC. Among the poets who will read from their own work are Kenneth Fearing, Sol Funaroff, Isidor Schneider, Countee Cullen, Joseph Freeman, Genevieve Taggard, and Edwin Rolfe, all of whom have contributed to NM.

The second annual Marxist Summer Day School will be held in New York this year from July 5 to August 18. Elizabeth Lawson, one of our frequent contributors, is director of the Summer Day School. Applications should be made to Room 301, 35 E. 12th St., NYC.

The New York Section of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom is sponsoring a radio program entitled "Races in a Democracy" on Monday, June 26, at 8 p.m. over Station WNYC, New York. The broadcast is one of a series called "Give Me Liberty," which is presented over the same station each Monday night.

Reminder to our West Coast readers: NM's newly opened West Coast Bureau, under the direction of George Willner, is at 6715 Hollywood Blvd., Rm. 287, Hollywood, Calif. Readers and friends of NM are cordially invited to drop in.

Georges Schreiber

Joseph North

A present NM editor and one of the founders of the weekly. A veteran newspaperman, North started his career in progressive journalism ten years ago when he became director of publicity for the International Labor Defense and later editor of its magazine, the "Labor Defender." It was he who helped build the Scottsboro case in 1931 into a world issue. After the founding of NM North's brilliant stories on such events as the Terre Haute strike, the New York taxi strike, and the release of Angelo Herndon put him in the front rank of the country's reporters. In 1936 he left NM to become the first editor of the "Sunday Worker." The following year he went to Spain, covering the front and behind the front for NM and the "Daily Worker." Returned from Spain last fall and rejoined the NM editorial staff in February. He recently paid a three-week visit to Hollywood and has prepared two articles on the changes that have been taking place in the movie colony. They will appear in NM within the next few weeks and will be followed by two articles by Ella Winter.

Who's Who

OWEN YOUNG KINNARD is a free-lance writer operating throughout the Midwest. . . . Dorothy Parker's latest book is *Here Lies,* a collection of her short stories and sketches. . . . Sylvia Townsend Warner's *After the Death of Don Juan* was published in this country during the winter. . . . John Stuart, co-author with Bruce Minton of *Men Who Lead Labor,* is again collaborating with Minton, this time on a study of America since the war. . . . Sidney Alexander has written poetry and criticism for NM. . . . John Vernon will write regular articles on radio for NM.

Flashbacks

MEMO to the inhabitants of the largest Negro city in the world: On or about June 28, 1913 began the influx of Negroes into Harlem. . . . "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing cl[illegible] have all the good things of life" thus began the preamble of the c[illegible]stitution of the Industrial Work[illegible] of the World adopted by delega[illegible] at the Chicago convention wh[illegible] formed the IWW on June 27, 19[illegible] . . . In Chicago twelve years ear[illegible] the same week Governor Alt[illegible] made another notable contribution [illegible] labor's progress. He freed Fiel[illegible] Neebe, and Schwab who had b[illegible] sentenced for life in connection w[illegible] the Haymarket bomb explosion, s[illegible] ing: "None of the defendants co[illegible] be at all connected with the case. [illegible] jury was picked. Wholesale brit[illegible] and intimidation of witnesses was [illegible] sorted to." . . . A year later, J[illegible] 26, 1894, Chicagoans were once n[illegible] near the center of labor's stage: [illegible] American Railway Union, led [illegible] Eugene V. Debs, began the g[illegible] Pullman strike. . . . The Internati[illegible] Labor Defense was organized J[illegible] 27, 1925 at Chicago.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notificatio[illegible] direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best result

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New Masses

VOLUME XXXII JUNE 27, 1939 NUMBER 1

The Insects—by Maxim Gorky

New Masses is proud to offer this hitherto unpublished short story by Maxim Gorky on the third anniversary of his death.

In the summer Barbara Dmitrovna often went with her daughter Lyuba to spend the whole day in the Cherimukhinsky pine woods, and almost always the nurse of the merchant Khrapov and his six-year-old grandson, Vanyusha, went with her. Like Lyuba he was a serious child, a strong little fellow with high forehead and bangs. Sometimes Commander Budagovsky's orderly, Nifont Kapendukhin, a sad, black-mustached man, marched behind them pushing an invalid chair with the commander's legless and dumb daughter, Lidochka, in it.

When they reached the forest the children played somewhere in the grass at its edge, observing the life of the insects around them. The soldier, sighing, would tell stories of his birthplace, and softly and meditatively sing its native songs.

Huge, fragrant pines gently swung their green paws, covering the children with shade. Last year's golden needles rustled as they fell from the branches. The gray, downy thrushes warbled. You could hear the tap-tap of the woodpecker and the buzzing of the bees and wasps. In the hazel bushes robins and chaffinches burst into song. Crossbills clicked their beaks in the tops of the pines. Earth celebrated her summer mass, swinging fragrant incense into the sky, and softly as a prayer flooding the air with sounds caressing the soul.

Kapendukhin would gaze steadfastly into Marie's broad, good-natured face, and his sweet voice quietly and melodiously brought forth the touching words of the song:

> Let us not, God,
> Die in a foreign land.
> There no one will grieve
> For your dying.

Lyuba and Vanyusha would lie on the grass side by side and the little girl would stretch out her hand in front of her, saying to her playmate, "Don't look down, look straight in front, like this——"

"I know," Vanya would say in a deep voice.

If you lie face downward on the ground and look into the green nets of grass, a multitude of small miracles reveal themselves to you. The fascinating life of tiny, clever creatures unfolds in front of your eyes.

The children knew this. After they had run until they were tired, they would lie silent and motionless for a long time, watching

Maxim Gorky

with sharp eyes what was happening in the grass.

Waddling heavily on wide-spread legs a round, black insect would crawl along, knocking its sides against stems golden and silver at the roots, spinning around, losing its way, twitching its feelers.

"That's a magician," Lyuba would whisper.

Vanyusha would think for a while and say, "It's a merchant. And that's a priest."

"Why?"

"Because he's fat."

"And aren't there fat magicians?"

"I don't know. But this one's a merchant. He's drunk. Can't you see?"

A ruby-colored ladybird would crawl slowly up a blade of grass, reach the joint, open her wing sheath, tremble, and knocking against a beech leaf, fall to the ground. There she would lie on her back, waving her small black legs in the air. A huge-headed ant would drag a piece of rust-red pine needle somewhere. Other ants would run up, touch the toiler with their feelers, then run off busily.

"You can see it's a carpenter," Vanyusha would say, snuffling through his wide nose.

A large, bronze beetle would crawl by. "A nun," Vanyusha would say, taking up a thin blade of grass, and preventing the nun from going on her way.

"Don't touch her," Lyuba would implore, arresting his hand. "She's going home, there are children there——"

Unnoticed, a green wood bug would hide itself on a plantain leaf. For some reason it would seem to Vanyusha to be a justice of the peace.

Life grew in front of the children's eyes, and wrapped in contemplation of its small miracles, they saw it through the eyes of insects. For them short grass was a great, thick forest, a clod of earth was a huge hill, and the beetles became familiar friends, easy to understand.

In the invalid carriage Lidochka lay motionless with half-open, large gray eyes. Marie rocked the unsteady vehicle, the springs creaked softly, and all the time the pensive voice of the black-mustached soldier could be heard.

Marie looked unblinkingly into his face with a tender, womanly glance and from time to time said with a confused smile, "Barbara Dmitrovna, please do tell him to sing something more. They're awfully good songs, his are—such sad ones, they take hold of your heart."

Kapendukhin, without waiting to be asked by the treasurer's wife, raised his thick eyebrows. His face took on a surprised look and he sang in a muted voice as if embroidering the soft air with the silken thread of the lovely song:

> Oh, grief, grief
> Poor mother seagull,
> Who led her children out,
> Onto the beaten highway.

The song recalled the children from their green fairyland, and exhausted by the sun, they rolled lazily over to the soldier's feet.

> There the carters walked,
> And found those tiny seagulls,
> Drove away the mother,
> And took them to themselves.

sang Kapendukhin rubbing his left eye; and Marie, bending her head, blew her nose.

In a great continuous wave the low hum of life flowed over the earth. Bees buzzed, birds sang, the grass rustled, the ancient pine wood answered with sweet succulent sounds, and more loudly, more joyfully, the song of the invisible lark rang out in the hot blue sky.

Little Lyuba, shaking her curly head, crawled on all fours up to her mother, and, climbing on her knees, asked softly, "Why are they crying?"

"Because they're sorry for the seagull."

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Barbara Dmitrovna sat with a book in her hands on the bare root of a mast pine. A mighty branch of the tree spread into the field under the sun, and the latticed shade of its paws spread over the little woman with her kindly, austere face and gray dress.

Her daughter looked up at her, and then around, and said, smiling, "Mama, you're like a tiny little insect—big as this."

She showed her mother the tip of her finger smeared with earth and resin.

"My granddad had as many as twenty pairs of bullocks," buzzed the soldier, shaking his head to and fro. "He was a carter, and my father and my uncle too. My father when he was little went after fish; and up to the sea as far as the Crimea he carted fish, tobacco, and carp. My granddad was 103 years old when he died. And before the freeing of the serfs the squire ruined him, left him with nothing."

Vanyusha, lying on the soldier's knees, painstakingly tried to twist his stiff black mustaches upward and hindered him from speaking.

"Homesick for your own native parts?" asked Marie, sighing.

"Oh, dear heart," answered the soldier, carefully removing the boy's hand from his mustaches, "could I be anything else but homesick?"

"Don't speak," implored Vanyusha.

From her chair the dumb child measured them all in turn, as if touching them with her strange glance. Lidochka's head was pointed, the little face drawn like an old woman's. In it the round gray-black eyes rolled restlessly. But if a butterfly, a fly, or some other insect settled on the carriage, the dark pupils ran together over the bridge of the nose, became fixed in a sharp glance. A dry hand cautiously stretched out toward the living creature, and if she managed to seize it, slowly and deliberately she tore off its legs and wings. When it flew off alive, the girl's eyes followed it with a deep, melancholy look.

"You damn fool," shouted the boy, poking out his tongue and shaking his fist.

"Oh, Vanyusha," Marie silenced him, "how can you swear so?"

"Granddad swears."

"Lidochka's ill. She's a poor little mite."

"She strips them when they're alive," protested Vanyusha.

Lyuba, trembling, said to her mother, "Mama, don't let her catch flies. Don't let her catch anyone."

Barbara Dmitrovna soothed the agitated children. She told them a story. They both pressed against her, listened dreamily, gazing into her beautiful face. With elusive words as fine as golden spiders' webs the old ballads ensnared them in a delicate net.

At this moment Kapendukhin and Marie disappeared unnoticed behind the trees. Usually after such a brief walk they would come back slowly as if unwillingly, as if obeying someone's command. They would come back looking away from each other, as if embarrassed or as though they had been quarreling.

But this time Marie ran out of the forest quickly. Her face was covered with tears. She wiped them from her cheeks with the palm of her hand and, smiling a guilty smile, went up to Barbara Dmitrovna, sank on the ground near her, kissing her shoulder, and loudly burst into tears—or was it laughter?

"Well, go for another little run," said the treasurer's wife hurriedly to the children, "and then home. Off with you."

"I'm going to be a swallow," cried Lyuba running off.

"And I'm a raven," declared Vanyusha after some thought. He sat down on his heels and, hopping after his friend like a frog, began to crow in a deep voice. Afterwards he got up and, waving his outstretched arms, ran gliding into the field.

"Well, Masha," said the treasurer's wife, stroking the young woman's head kindly.

"Oh, my dear," the nurse began to whisper gasping and blushing, "oh, my dear lady, we've sinned. I didn't think. I didn't even dream of anything and then all at once. We talked and talked all the time about good things, and then suddenly held each other tightly—tightly, oh, holy mother of God! What ever shall we do now? Help me, tell us what to do. I'm afraid now, I'm not myself, and I don't know anything."

She whispered and a drunken joy glowed in her voice and on her face, and her eyes shone with great happiness.

"May God be good to you," said the gentle Barbara Dmitrovna softly. "He seems to be a good man."

"Oh, Barbara Dmitrovna, he's such a splendid fellow. And he speaks that funny language of his so well, dear soul. And I'm three years younger than he is. 'Thank you,' he says, 'for your kindness.' That's what he said to me. And all the time 'you,' not 'thou'—did you ever! Nifont," she shouted loudly and joyfully, "Come here, quickly."

Nifont, with bowed head, already stood behind them peeling the bark of a pine with his finger, and in answer to Marie's call, said guiltily in an embarrassed voice: "Madame Barbara it was God's will. Marie's a good woman and has become dear as my own sister to me. And we talk together and we're silent together. That heavenly love, that present, I take it with an honest heart. . . . Don't worry, lady, and you, darling. We'll get married. I've another year, seven months, and eleven days of service and then I'll be free altogether."

"Dear lady," interrupts Marie, "I can't tell you how sorry I am for him. He talks about those steppes of his, and bullocks, and I can't help crying. All alone in foreign parts, where they even speak differently—I think, oh heavens!"

Barbara Dmitrovna looked at them, smiling gaily. She wanted to find special words for them which they would remember all their lives, to say to them from a full heart; but a tiny grief beat silently within her and there was a little envy of another's happiness.

The children ran up, flushed, untidy, gasping, and dropped on the ground. Vanka hit his knee painfully against a root and swore lustily, "You damn wood devils."

They went home over the sun-soaked field, trampling the short grass withered by the day's heat, picking by the wayside white and rose-white immortelles, golden celandines, and lilac dodders.

They walked silently, meditatively, unhurriedly. Occasionally the soldier said to the children, "Well, come and take a ride on my shoulders."

Lyuba refused, but Vanyusha, smiling happily, climbed on Kapendukhin's neck, and perching there, cried in his deep voice, "Gee-up. Off you go."

From behind the low hills appeared the multi-colored roofs of the town, shaded by the dark green leaves of the trees. The sun glittered on the panes of the dormer windows, and in the heavy air there flowed monotonously the quiet noise of provincial life.

"Don't forget us, dear lady," whispered Marie softly. "Teach us what to do."

Smiling, Barbara Dmitrovna quietly replied, "Don't be afraid of anything, Marie. You must love in such a way that everyone who looks at you will be happy and glad, that they themselves will want to love ardently. I don't know what to say to you. I'm a sort of poor. . . . "

And Marie said pityingly, looking into the woman's face with gentle, kindly eyes, "Oh I know how lonely your life is my kind-hearted little lady."

Satiated with sun and air, drunk with the perfume of the forest, tired with running and the pleasant impressions of the day, the little girl walked at her mother's side, listened attentively to her quiet words, remembered them. And in the evening when she was already in bed she asked, "Mama, are you poor?"

"Yes."

"Am I poor too?"

"You too."

"Is it good to be poor?"

"Sleep, my sweet."

After a short silence Lyuba announced, "I can't sleep today. Why haven't you got a ring? Give me your hand—see—nothing. Papa has one. And a watch. Is he rich?"

"Let me go to sleep, Lyubashka," said her mother in mock severity, pulling the sheet over herself.

It was hot in the room. A night moth beat softly against the window pane. A cricket chirped, gnats buzzed, entangled in the muslin netting over the bed.

"You don't want to sleep at all," said the little girl, climbing on her mother's breast. She took her mother's cheeks between tiny palms and kissed her lips.

"M-ma, that's how Lyuba kisses Mummy-bumblebee." She bounced on her mother's breast, hugged and tickled her; and when she wanted to speak, kissed her.

Both laughed, and gradually the little girl fell asleep with a smile on her face.

MAXIM GORKY.

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A N E D I T O R I A L A R T I C L E

Free Public Education Is at Stake

The first line of defense of our democracy, the public schools, are being threatened with vast curtailment. Millions for express highways, as children's schools are shut.

MRS. LAURA LUNDE is chairman of the education committee of the Illinois League of Women Voters. She is describing school conditions in downstate Illinois. Listen: There are schools here which have no source of water supply. Children have to carry water to school in little pails. In the winters their hands freeze. Some of these schools have neither toilets nor outhouses. In one district the entire appropriation for equipment, books, heating, upkeep of the building, and teacher's salary is slightly more than $200. And they are talking of cutting the state's education budget!

Look at the news stories:

December 1938: Payless paydays and closed schools threaten Ohio. The schools are closed in Dayton. In Parma, O., the schools have been kept open only because the teachers waived their claims to salaries due them for the balance of the year. Philadelphia schools are confronted with an enforced closing of one month in December 1939, as a result of actions this year by the Philadelphia Board of Education.

February 1939: Minneapolis teachers receive 12 percent salary reduction. Last year the schools were forced to close for three weeks preceding Christmas vacation. In Dayton further cuts are threatened. The school superintendent urges abolition of five elementary schools, one high school, abolition of transportation and competitive athletic programs.

April 1939: Atlanta, Ga., Schools in approximately one hundred Georgia counties will be compelled to close their doors before the completion of the current term because of the Legislature's failure to provide funds. Rural areas are hardest hit.

May 1939: For the past two weeks in Akron teachers have suffered payless paydays. In Shamokin, Pa., more than two hundred teachers are out on a "holiday" protest against educational cuts. The Blue Island Community High School of Blue Island, Ill., closed two months ago, was ordered reopened by the Board of Education after a meeting attended by 500 parents.

The plague spreads over the land. It is eating away at our first line of defense. Democracy is impossible without free public education. If we cannot save education, we cannot save democracy.

Listen, America: Governor Heil, would-be fuhrer of Wisconsin, proposes a 15.4 percent slash in the University budget despite increased enrollment; an 11.3 percent cut in the budget for teachers' colleges, in the face of a 46 percent increase in students during the past decade. The Wisconsin Federation of Labor, roused by the Republicans' attack on education, declares: "There must be no retreat in education. Will the system of free public education be safe in the future if cuts are allowed now? Organized labor from the first has fought for free public schools. Only free public education could guarantee democracy. Only free public education could give the children of workers their chance in life. To serve the needs of the common people, education should be expanded, not cut."

The plague spreads over the land. The attack of the Republican-controlled Legislature upon the educational system of New York is the latest in a long series of nationwide assaults by reaction. It is also the most serious. For if the school system of our wealthiest city and state is to be slashed, what will happen to the schools in our most poverty-stricken areas? The school issue in New York is a test case for the nation. If kindergartens, night schools, recreation centers, citizenship classes are to go by the board in New York, they will stand a slim chance to survive in other communities.

Is it possible that a state which can find

Mischa Richter

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funds for the construction of express highways, bridges, tunnels, subways, parks, recreation beaches must close the school doors in the face of kindergarten children?

This is the World of Tomorrow as the reactionaries picture it. They are giving us a little preview of what would happen if they were elected in 1940. And the reactionary press, led by the New York *Herald Tribune* and *World-Telegram,* applauds the preview with vigor.

There is no real necessity for reduction of the educational budget either by the city or the state of New York. They are both in good financial condition. In New York City the taxes of 1938 are more nearly paid up than they have ever been at this time of the year. When the teachers' pay was cut in 1932 the city bonds were selling 20 percent below par; the same bonds, bearing 4½ percent interest, are selling 40 percent above par. But there are constitutional limitations on the city's financing which the realty and utility interests want maintained while they work at Albany to reduce state aid for education. The city is thus circumscribed on the one hand by restrictions on its taxing power and on the other by curtailment of state aid. The henchmen of big business in the Legislature are eloquent on the subject of home rule and local responsibility; their agents in local governments are eloquently indignant over limitations put upon them by the state. This system of "checks and balances" is an ideal arrangement to enable the politicians to pass the buck from one to another and to confuse the people.

Taxation has been defined as cooperative buying. For the people of small or moderate means it is most economical to purchase many essential services, like education, medical care, and water supply, through a system of taxation. The anti-taxationists would have us believe that the use of public funds for such services is a form of public relief bestowed upon the indigent by the thrifty. They do all they can to obscure the fact that all who work for their living are taxpayers and the poor bear a proportionately higher burden than the rich. They obscure the fact that there is tremendous evasion of taxes in upper income brackets. Last year the tax on Wall Street speculative profits (the tax on capital gains) was quietly reduced to half of that on earned income. The anti-taxationists shield these profits at the criminal sacrifice of education.

It is argued by the reactionaries that New York spends more money than other states on education. But they fail to point out that the educational budget of New York is not as high as it would be if an average effort were being made to support the schools. That is, even though New York spends more per pupil in average attendance than any other state, it is not spending nearly so much in proportion to its ability as the other states.

No, the explanation of the reduction lies in the tory character of the Legislature. The same Legislature was the author of numerous anti-labor measures, refused even to consider the child labor amendment, refused to lift the lid off the cesspool of graft and corruption in the Albany city government, passed the Devaney bill which was designed to harass teachers and other civil service employees who take the lead in progressive measures, and refused to deal with the problem of the consolidation of small, inefficient one-room schools upstate even though millions of dollars in educational funds can be saved by proper consolidation. The Legislature was dominated by the enemies of all the progressive measures associated with the New Deal.

Labor Councilman Michael Quill said recently in a speech to a mass meeting of teachers that it was inevitable that the relatively decent standards of pay and tenure in the New York school system should become the object of attack. They stand out as a goal toward which the teachers of the nation would strive. To the tory-minded these relatively high standards are intolerable. The tendency toward higher expenditures for social services of all kinds arouses the fighting instincts of all enemies of democracy. Hence, the people are going to have a fight to retain whatever meager social income has accrued to them under the profit economy. The $10,000,000 cut in state aid for education is a "compromise" figure. The high-pressure lobbyists of the real estate interests were at Albany demanding a $30-000,000 cut in the school fund!

The educational gains of a century are at stake. We strongly urge all of our readers, no matter what part of the country they may live in, to write to Governor Lehman asking that he call a special session of the New York State Legislature. The budget cuts must be restored at once. The Legislature must be forced to act. Democracy cannot afford to abandon its first line of defense.

The Devil Will Come

Being no less than twenty millions rich,
Faustus will give himself to reverent air,
Riding out to open the World's Fair;
Let not this gold be stifled in a ditch,
Diverted by a skid to either side;
The highway shall be honest, shall be wide,
And lest his shaken sweetbreads should be sore,
The world must sleek the roadway to his door.

Many men will fall behind this year,
Abandoned as time walks; variety of bones
Under the cars, under the cobblestones
Serve for the body of this thoroughfare;
This year men and women will fall behind,
Their lungs exploded and their eyes made blind,
Their mouths frozen, silence on their breath;
This is a year appointed for much death.

Bury them deep under the traveling wheel;
Place the laughing man and the lover
In a good road for the world to travel over;
Bury them beneath the automobile,
Whose melted flesh and bone together make
This paved street for the parade to take,
This bone, this blood; but Faustus' magic wit
Shall build the future factory of it.

Built on the basis of these buried men
We celebrate the wheelbase of the car,
Pointed futureward with headlight-star;
Because they lapse and do not rise again
The brassy bank makes mortgage with their bones
In solemn concord of the building-loans;
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike
And Faustus makes his speech before the mike.

The World's Fair opens and the golden key
Unlocks the gates of heaven for the crowd;
The rickshaws run, the subway trains are loud,
And Faustus flowers in photography;
Between the air and the electric light
See Faustus painted on the astonished sight;
Between the neon lights of joy and sorrow
Now showing: Faustus in the World Tomorrow.

He sets his feet upon the iron towers,
A palace and a pylon on each hand;
His shadow purples the imported sand,
The murmurs of his mouth are hothouse flowers.
Replete in fattened leather and in chrome,
His car at evening ferries Faustus home
Musing the gate-receipts, the dancer's knees—
And yet, at midnight, Mephistopheles.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

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The Doctor in War

Dr. Leo Eloesser, an American surgeon in Spain, continues his account of lifesaving under fire.

"OUR next assignment was south of the Ebro. We left Barcelona on March 15, eleven of us in a small ambulance and a mobile operating unit set up in two larger vans. The party was comprised of Dr. Leonard Larsen of Point Reyes, myself, and four nurses, Ave Bruzzichesi, Evelyn Andell, Alice Wagnon, and Cleo Duncan; three chauffeurs, Jose Martinez Ruiz of the Spanish transport corps attached to the Surgeon General's office, Jack Goldstein, Tom Hayes, and two sanitarios, Manuel Losana and Pelegrin Saenz, medical orderlies, and students of medicine. We left in the morning and got to our destination late at night, about 2 a.m.

"The town where we went (Tortosa) had had an uncommon amount of punishment by aviation. The hospital was set up in a suburb across the river. We drove in there and tried to find it. The town stood in the moonlight, apparently deserted—houses shuttered up fast, walls gleaming white in the ghostly light. We knocked and banged at half a dozen doors, but were able to arouse no one. Finally in response to our calls, a man got up from a flat-terraced roof and told us where the hospital was—in an enormous old Jesuit convent, a very rich one, most luxuriously equipped: beds and fine linen sheets and blankets. The convent had been converted into a municipal hospital, but just before we got there the municipal hospital and the doctor in charge began to move out across the river and left us in charge—taking the equipment with him, incidentally.

LOOKING AROUND

"We poked around the next morning, looking the place over. There were a number of large dormitories, used for wards, and big rooms down on the main floor for classification; a big room lined with oak wardrobes around the walls, where the church vestments had been kept, now filled with women sewing and sorting linen; all kinds of little cells and cubicles, occupied by old people—dodderers, mostly old nuns and church pensioners. They looked upon us with uneasiness and misgivings when we first came—fearing, I suppose, that they were to be put out of their old haunts or that dire things would happen to them. But we left them in their little cubicles and attics and they'd flit about the hospital, coming suddenly on one unawares, like some dark little bat. They were very grateful when they found that no harm was to come to them.

"A big olive orchard surrounded the place, and gardens with a windmill that didn't work, irrigating ditches, stone walls, and little stone outhouses, also full of pensioners. In the center of the convent grounds was a big church filled with all kinds of material, electric motors, pumps, a quantity of iron pipe and tools for threading and cutting it—all kinds of things. We started to get installed and set up during the day. That night of bright moonlight the nightly bombardment came, as usual. Within half an hour the place was full of the most horrible injuries—people screaming and groaning with pain and terror, little children looking blankly at the wall, people with their arms and legs blown off; women, old people, children—forty of them. We worked all night attending to their wounds and injuries. Almost nightly there were the same scenes—not soldiers, only the civilian population. We stayed there four days and then got orders to move on to Vallivana to join the maneuver army.

"What a horrible thing to see them come in all night, groaning and crying out, legs and arms shattered and shot off, bellies, heads shot through, laid out on the floor on stretchers in the light of an automobile headlamp fastened to a storage battery, for the current in the house keeps going off and blowing out fuses.

"Some thirty or so medical officers: all kinds of men, but all brave and smiling and uncomplaining. And truckloads of soldiers going past on the way to the front, singing and laughing. Nothing of desperation or panic. One constantly wonders what they feel in their hearts.

"It all seems so impossible, sitting in this little sunny rocky canyon with ants crawling busily around and a couple of partridges whirring out of the bush and butterflies flying futilely about, that so close to here men are killing each other.

THE STRAGGLERS

"It's only three days since I was sitting on the hillside writing this, but so much has happened that I can no longer keep count of the days. The next day, April 13, half of our surgical teams at the hospital left for a new hospital they had established down nearer the coast. The stragglers down the road increased, poor, tired, dusty men, refugees in two-wheeled carts high off the ground, piled up with precarious mountains of bedding and pots and pans and household belongings, men and women following them down the dusty road, one or two dusty donkeys dragging slowly along.

HOW THEY WORKED

"Each place one goes, the main job is to try to establish some sort of order out of the hellish chaos. You come into some sort of a place and try to set it up as a hospital, or try to get your operating room and surgery going if it is already set up. You stumble about by the light of a candle among wounded lying on the ground on stretchers, or grope about among dirty cots, men groaning, dying, everything full of blood, of dirt, of pieces of clothing cast aside or cut off, of partly eaten victuals, hunks of half-devoured bread. You get the place half straight in a few days, everyone working like Trojans, the stretcher bearers carrying and hauling cots up and down old curved staircases, giving their men food and drink with gentle, patient, bloodstained hands. Exhausted as they are and overcome by sleep, you find them dozing on chairs and in all kinds of unoccupied crannies, under stairs and in deserted attics. On the road, in the night, trucks and convoys go rattling by, and always you keep one eye and one ear half cocked for aviation, wondering what you'd do if they hit the teeming place you're in.

"You keep going until two, three, four o'clock, until dawn, or bright daylight. You get up frowzy, wash if you can, shave occasionally, and start off again. Tired, blinking staff officers drive up, usually in the middle of the night, in cars that should long since have been junked. Fords that have gone 100,000 miles without an overhaul, and Grahams and all sorts of things that can be made to run—cars that are always getting stalled and breaking down. They go into a huddle with you about evacuation and problems of food and beds and they drive off again, if the car will go. Out in the dusty sunny or moonlit road in front of the hospital the stream of carts and refugees goes down the valley, plodding on to safety. Women with little children hanging onto their skirts; they stand about the hospital and the men water their mules at the trough; the women wash their faces and their babies' faces; the children hang about the hospital door and the auto-ambulances and try to beg a little food. In the distance, over the clear rocky hills, comes the cannonading and now and then a heavy boom that means a bombardment, and slowly over the ridge you see a column of thick smoke mount into the sky.

"These descriptions of advanced surgical units are taken from letters written a year ago. Things were looking bad then—food was scarce and so were supplies; but not nearly so scarce as they must have been in the last few months of the war. Chick peas and salt codfish were the staples for those able to eat them; the more severely wounded and men on diets got mainly tinned milk and water until they could be sent to the rear where some kind of diet was possible.

"What has become of these brave men now? asks Garcia Lorca:

> I came into this world with eyes
> And I leave it without them.
> O Lord of the greatest sorrow
> And then—
> A candle and a shroud upon the ground."

LEO ELOESSER.

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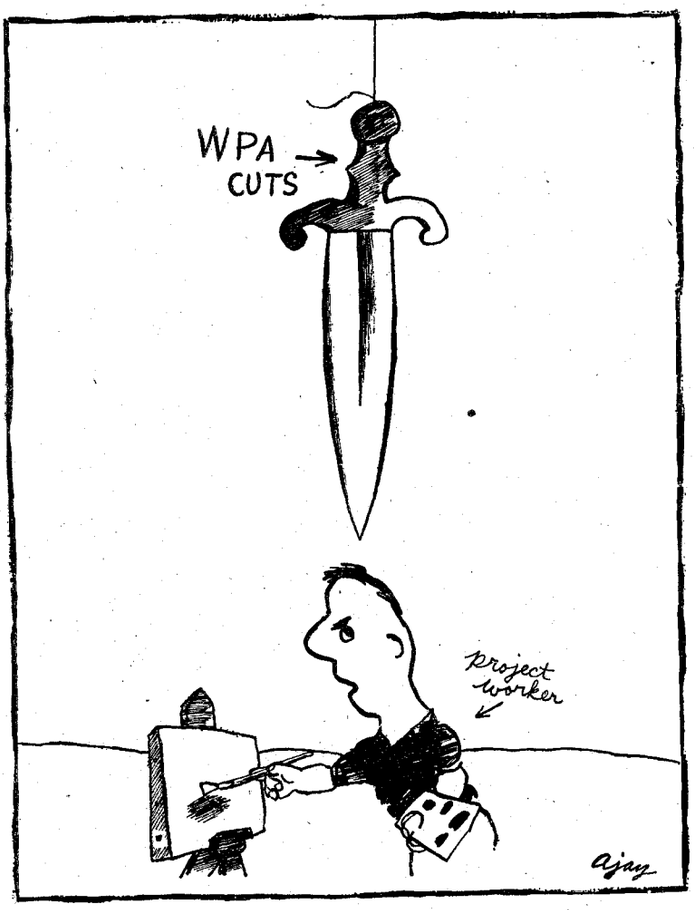
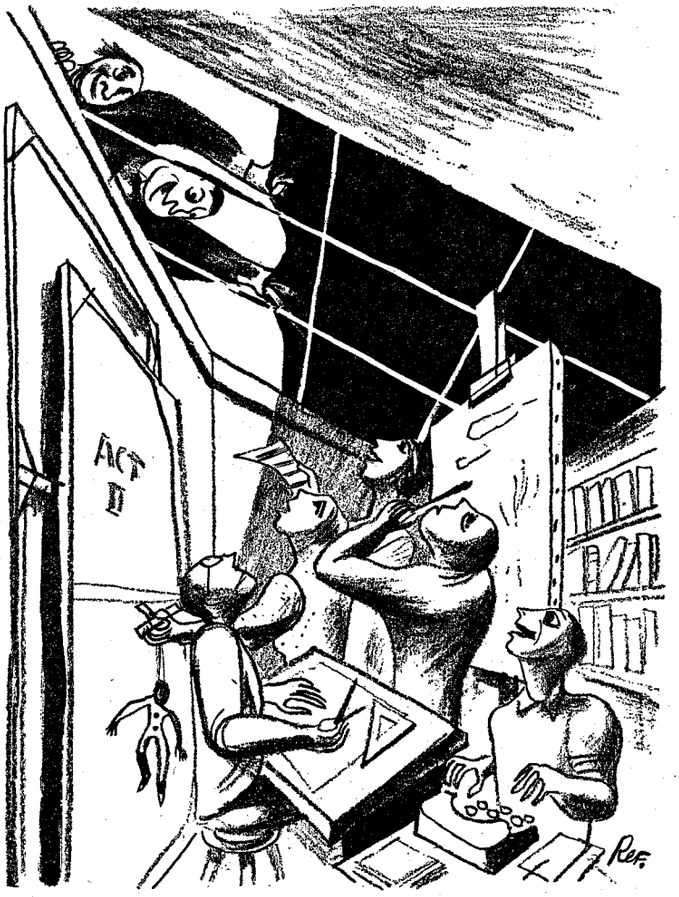
The Woodrum Committee Investigating WPA HUGO GELLERT

Yesterday—Lest We Forget! DANIEL FITZPATRICK



A. AJAY



Curtain? ANTON REFREGIER

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Don't Let the Congressional Vandals Do This! JOHN GROTH

A. BIRNBAUM

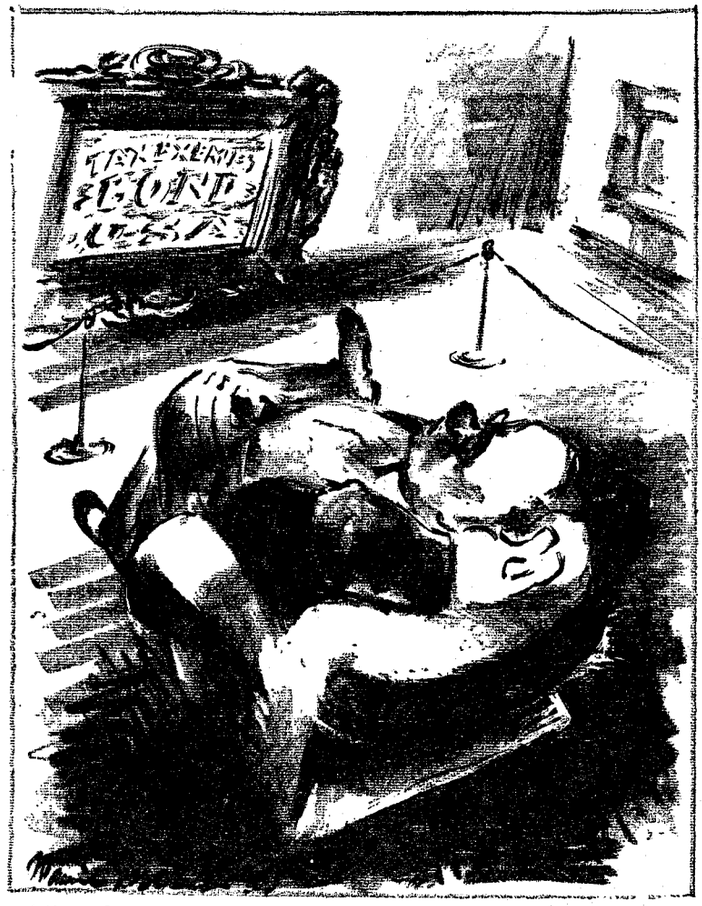
Back to Pamphleteering

THE CARTOONS on this spread, in addition to others by William Hernandez, Herb Kruckman, Victor Candell, William Gropper, and Jack Markow, are reproduced from a nickel pamphlet defending WPA by members of the American Artists Congress. Max Weber, internationally distinguished painter and leader of the congress, introduces the cartoons with the following statement:

The work accomplished by the Federal Art Project has been an enriching and deeply germinative influence upon millions of people and has awakened in them a new sense of values and a greater art consciousness. Many new talents and inherent esthetic gifts have been brought to light that might have lain unfructified and dormant had they been neglected. Everywhere a veritable hunger for theater, music, art exhibitions, symposia, and the ensuing discussions is manifest. With such enthusiasm in the cultural quest, our nation, already the acknowledged industrial giant among nations, bids fair to rise to like eminence and excellence in the arts. Our national genius is a composite of the genius of the whole world; our cultural aspirations are therefore well founded.

In employing their art to attack reaction these twelve contemporaries are reviving the pamphleteering tradition, going back to the medium of Phillipon and Daumier to reach the people. This is the first of a series of graphic broadsides the American Artists Congress will train on the enemies of the people. "The conditions for democracy and for art are one and the same. . . . Nourish the conditions of a free life and you nourish the arts too," said Franklin Roosevelt. These satirists hawking their work in the streets for a nickel call on the people who see their pamphlet to write their congressmen and newspapers denouncing the project-wreckers.

Save the arts for the American people! Down with the barbarians in Congress!



A Real Government Work of Art MAURICE BECKER

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$2.96 per Month per Person

How Omaha effectively destroys its people by starving them on the fantastically low relief dole. But Nebraska has no income tax.

Omaha, Neb.

TWICE each month during 1938 *Time* carried a full-page advertisement informing Mr. Luce's select audience of executives that Nebraska is the nation's "White Spot"—a land of industrial milk and honey where business, so cruelly oppressed these six years past, may find a safe and prosperous haven. The phrasing varied, but the import of the ad remained the same, a dignified and straightforward message couched in those smoothly facile periods affected by the better agencies for their institutional clients. A recent one read, in part:

> While many states plunge more deeply into debt, piling new burdens on farmer, worker, and business man, Nebraska rejects extravagance. Unharassed by punitive taxation, industry finds new opportunity in Nebraska . . . where public officials are *still* public officials. Nebraska's famous governmental policies are dictated by the public will—and public servants obey the people's commands.

Thus the pattern of the campaign; and as such campaigns go, this one, nominally sponsored by the Associated Industries of Nebraska, has been reasonably successful. If there has been no mass hegira of intimidated capitalists, if no new smokestacks have risen above the Platte, it has at least evoked national attention, and while some part of the resultant publicity has been unfavorable, this was certainly an anticipated hazard. Whatever the criticism, the good seed has been sown, and—here the Associated Industries may smile comfortably—the hard core of that seed is factual.

The supporting figures are in themselves interesting, with the sum of Nebraska's prudent husbandry set off in neat black and white against the profligacy of her sister commonwealths. Here is the "White Spot's" Exhibit No. 1, and only the captious would remark that in this accounting no allowance is made for the program's cost.

There is, for example, relief, and more specifically, relief as administered in Omaha, Nebraska's largest city.

Stricken since 1930 by the growing economic paralysis that has gripped its trading area, a paralysis induced by recurrent drought and deflated agricultural prices, the city has been compelled to meet a growing problem of unemployment until today one-fourth of its families are dependent upon some form of public or private aid. The manner in which it has met that problem suggests an enlightening footnote to the "White Spot" campaign.

To begin with, there is the statistical record. Until the liquidation of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in May of 1936, the cost of relief in Omaha was borne largely by the federal government, and while the assistance given was generally inadequate, it was at least comparable to the standards prevailing nationally. In April of that year, approximately 4,800 families were receiving direct relief with cash disbursements exceeding $200,000 a month. Neither the county nor the city was prepared to assume this burden, and the crisis precipitated by the withdrawal of federal aid was met, after a few weeks of indecision, by a temporary municipal appropriation of $25,000. E. F. Magaret, a retired wholesale implement dealer and self-described "trouble shooter" for the mayor, was designated to administer this fund through the Omaha Welfare Department, and he handled the assignment so "successfully"—after five months the appropriation was not wholly exhausted—that he was appointed head of the Douglas County Assistance Bureau when a permanent relief organization was set up in October.

SAVING ON RELIEF COSTS

With less than $300,000 a year available to the bureau, through a special tax levy enacted by the Legislature, substantial surpluses were reported in both 1937 and 1938, surpluses which have steadily increased as Magaret has given concrete formulation to his relief policies. From an initial refusal to grant assistance to any person arbitrarily defined as "employable," the bureau moved on to strike rent and utilities off the list of necessities, pauperized medical care, and finally limited aid to food orders upon two commissaries which it maintains.

After provision for overhead and incidental costs, the direct expenditure for relief in November 1938 amounted to $6,540, with 642 cases, embracing 2,207 persons, receiving assistance, or an average of $2.96 per person. Although the average per case declined from $11 in January to $10.19 in November, the total disbursed during the entire year was only $80,234. (Ironically enough, this was slightly less than the estimated cost of the "White Spot" advertising campaign.)

If, however, you will make the effort, and if your stomach is reasonably strong, you can leave the offices of the Relief Bureau, and by going out into the streets of Omaha, talking to Omaha people, see something of the actuality underlying Mr. Magaret's neatly compiled data. By doing that you will at least learn the meaning of "$2.96 per month per person" as it relates to human beings not dissimilar to yourself, and learn too that such a relationship can be as real as the fake-baroque facades of Omaha's theaters and the cultivated, somber dignity of Omaha's banks—even as real as the broad, fertile acres of the Missouri Valley.

Talk first to the trained social workers in charge of Omaha's private and semi-private charitable agencies: C. F. McNeil, head of the Community Chest and former director of the Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration; Leeta Holdridge, executive director of the Visiting Nurses Association; Edith Dumont Smith, secretary of the Family Welfare Association; Paul Josephson, assistant director of the Community Chest and special agent for the U. S. Children's Bureau. "I am sorry, but I cannot honestly say that no one has starved." "Through our health stations and our baby clinics we should like to show the effect of these relief standards on children. We certainly feel—there is no question about it—that they have definitely and permanently affected the health of hundreds in the community." "Although federal and state grants were made on the assumption that the county would provide decent standards of care for persons needing general relief, Douglas County has signally failed to do so. There has been widespread suffering." "One can say that relief cases ineligible for WPA or social security grants are faced with gradual starvation." In these isolated comments you have the refrain of their criticism, and it is echoed in the conversation of one or two labor leaders, a few clergymen and physicians. But in Omaha such voices carry little weight.

EVICTIONS

The Assistance Bureau gives relief only to those physically unable to obtain employment, but because it makes no provision for rent or utilities, it paradoxically expects these people, incapacitated by definition, to find housing for themselves. In some manner or other, through begging or odd jobs or the charity of a landlord or relative, most of them have been able to keep a roof over their heads. If there is no heat they can look for coal along the railroad tracks, and even tarpaper will furnish some semblance of light. But evictions are an increasing commonplace in Omaha, and with eviction, and the consequent disintegration of the family many children have had to take refuge in orphanages.

To be strictly accurate, however, it is incorrect to say that no provision whatever is made for housing. Two years ago the Assistance Bureau took over an abandoned building that had once been used as a medical school, and here temporary shelter is given to a few homeless families and an indefinite number of single men. Under the supervision of an untrained relief client, the building is a vermin-infested incubator of disease, as coldly institutional as a county poor farm and as squalid as an East Side "old law" tenement.

So much, then, for the conditions under which these people live. But do not make the

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mistake of believing that they represent the lowest stratum in Omaha's social hierarchy. There is another group still more hopelessly trapped, a group which can envy even the meager allowance of food doled out by the county. Numbered in the hundreds, it includes transients and itinerant workers ineligible for relief, individuals certified to WPA but laid off or as yet unplaced, and others refused WPA certification but defined as employable by the Assistance Bureau. The Family Welfare Association recently investigated approximately one hundred such cases. The interviews are summarized in bare outline, concise and factual, and three of them, selected at random, give the picture more graphically than any thousand words of interpretation.

Floyd and Florence D.: Five children, the eldest ten years old. When visited, the three older children had just left for school after a breakfast of flour-and-water pancakes. After threatened eviction, the landlord let Mr. D. work out rent. WPA until June 1938; private job, dishwasher, $10 a week, until December. Assistance Bureau refused relief a few days before Christmas, as Mr. D. employable. Surplus Aid gave a small sack of coal and they have picked up some on the tracks. They need food and fuel.

Dan and Mary S.: Elderly couple. Mr. S. is a cripple, unable to get old age assistance because he cannot prove his age. Mrs. S. was laid off WPA in June because she is hard of hearing. This handicap makes it difficult for her to find private employment. They live in a two-room shack and were burning tarpaper, which made the room so smoky that it was impossible for the visitor to remain inside. They were about to eat their supper, consisting of food Mrs. S. had picked up on the dump. They asked the Assistance Bureau for help and were told that the agency "couldn't help anyone."

Dora C.: Son twelve and niece twelve. Mrs. C. was laid off WPA in November. She applied at the Assistance Bureau and was told that she could not see any of the staff. The family has been living on surplus food and a little oatmeal. For three days last week they had no fuel. The twelve-year-old boy was arrested yesterday for purse-snatching, and his mother feels that this theft was instigated by the family situation, as he had never done any such thing before.

Thus, as recorded here, one American city has met its depression-urgent problem of mass unemployment and mass destitution.

For fifty years Omaha has been almost completely open shop, with every attempt to organize its major industries bitterly and on the whole successfully opposed by the dominant business interests. No left-wing political group has been able to gain a serious foothold in the city. As a consequence, the working class has had little training or experience in the techniques of mass protest, and there has been no leadership or organizational framework through which it could exert the sheer pressure of its numbers. In isolating this as a primary cause, it is also important to note that the very absence of demonstrations, coupled with the apparent docility of the poor and their lack of a medium through which to express their grievances, has served to insulate Omaha's strongly entrenched upper middle class and the half-dozen or so capitalists who rule the city from any contact with the realities of the situation.

An investigator for the Des Moines Bureau of Municipal Research made this sufficiently clear when, in a confidential report, he wrote:

Both W. A. Ellis, assistant commissioner of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, and Walter Pierpont, president of the Omaha Taxpayers Association, agreed that there had not been any riots or other public disturbances over the amount of relief granted. Despite the claim that the relief is inadequate, at all events it must not be less than the minimum beyond which the unemployed would complain in the form of public disturbances.

The quotation can well stand beside one from John Gunther's *Inside Europe:*

Hunger, prolonged misery, and distress such as have afflicted the people of Danubia are likely, it seems, to produce not revolt but apathy and inertia and a torpor of almost pathological quality. People do not make revolutions when hungry—at first—simply because hunger makes them weak.

But these words, as relevant to the situation existing today in Omaha as to the postwar destitution of Middle Europe, would have no meaning for Mr. Magaret and his associates. Practical men, impatient with such abstractions, they knew precisely what they wanted, have it now, and are thoroughly satisfied. Direct relief has been returned to the state and municipality, it is no longer administered by trained social workers; Nebraska remains the "White Spot," her financial stability unimpaired by irrelevant consideration for human welfare; and—conclusive rejoinder, bland, complacent smile—"We've damn well had no riots in Omaha!"

OWEN YOUNG KINNARD.

"Just what IS a 'balanced budget'?" John Heliker

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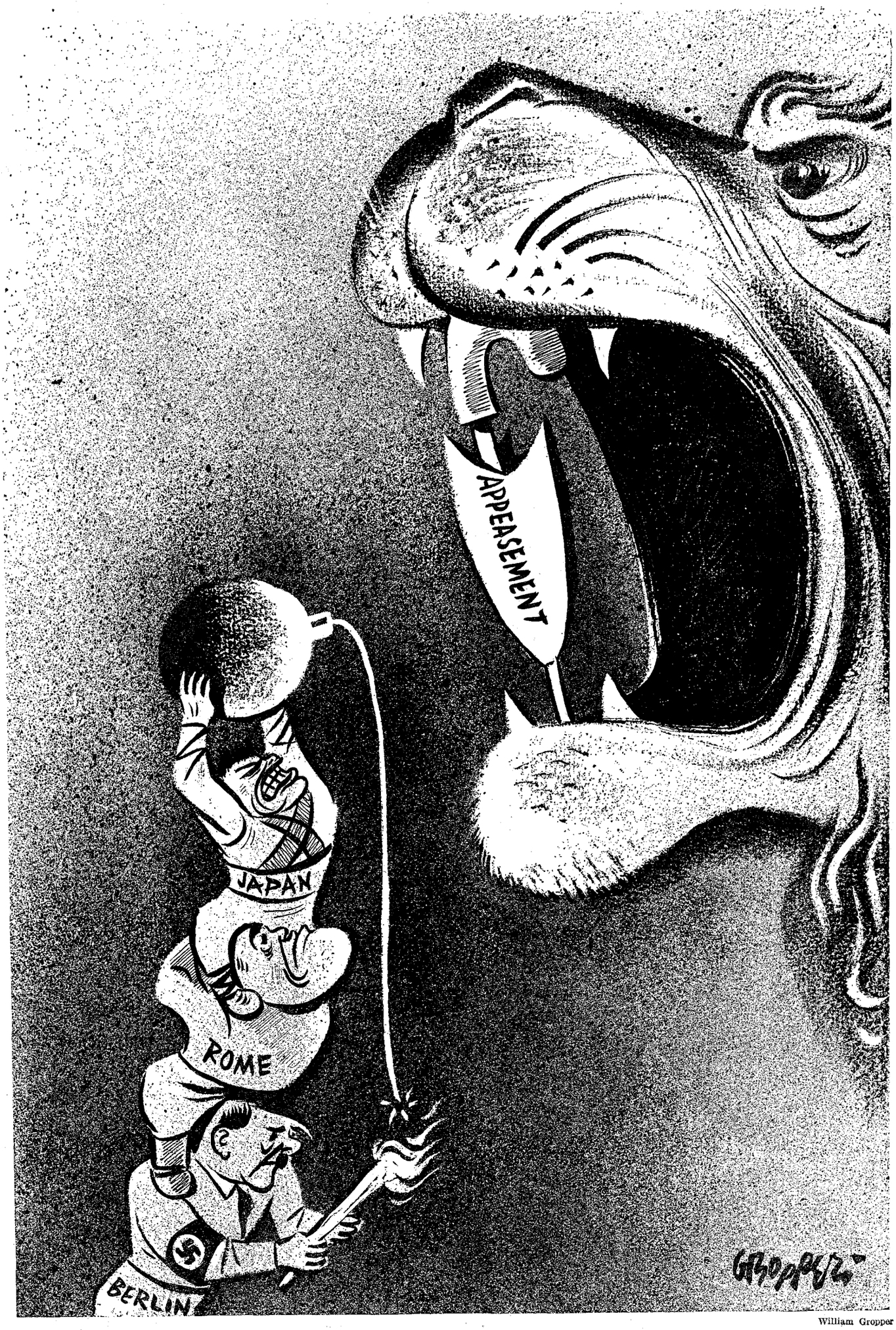

William Gropper

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The Araquistain Junta

A discredited politician forms a cabal with discredited journalists that aids the axis powers. Some echoes of "General Krivitsky."

Luis Araquistain, the former Spanish ambassador to France, signed the anti-Comintern pact a long time ago, but he never got around to advertising it until lately. Famed in pre-war Spain as a publicist of topnotch rank he knew the value of timing his story. Like all old hands at publicity, who wait for Sunday before releasing their story to the press, he bided his time. When he sent his stuff around he found an eager market in the commercial press and the sub-commercial journalism of Trotsky. He got around to blaming the loss of the Spanish war upon Communists and upon the Soviet Union at a moment when the world press had to admit —because Hitler and Mussolini were admitting it—that the fascist intervention had begun in the very first days of the war and that that intervention was of major magnitude. Mussolini admitted 100,000 Italians in Spain the first winter of the war. Hitler said that in reality he warred against the evil democracies as well as the Communists. (How well Munich illustrated that!) Sr. Araquistain aired his views at a time, too, when 35,000 Spaniards were being shot weekly by the Francoist inquisition. The tory papers that helped garrote Spain saw their chance to muddy the issues at this moment when all honest men approached unity in their horror at the Iberian events. They played the able publicist up. Yes, good timing.

Sr. Araquistain's arguments fall into three principal categories: first, that Largo Caballero was a great man and a good helmsman for Spain during the warfare; second, that the Communists scuttled Caballero when he refused to do the "bidding of Moscow"; and third, that "Moscow intervention" lost the war by alienating the democracies from Spain.

Moscow, in short, wanted to annex the Iberian peninsula to the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Long ago, in 1936, Litvinov declared at the Eighth Soviet Congress: "Our enemies maintain that we are striving to create a Communist Soviet state on the Pyrenean peninsula which we even intend to include in the Soviet Union. Such fairy tales for little children and big fools are, of course, circulated with a view to obscuring the true meaning of our real interest in Spanish events." At that time Litvinov was referring principally to the works of a man named Goebbels.

Echoes of Krivitsky

Let us consider Sr. Araquistain's charges seriatim. They are in the main charges of a bogus general Krivitsky, and of the shady newspaperman Irving Pflaum in the *American Mercury* for June—a sort of journalistic junta marshaled by Araquistain.

Caballero: Araquistain says that orders came from Moscow (oh, those omnipotent, eternal orders from Moscow) to dub Caballero the "Spanish Lenin." But the violently pro-Franco man Edward Knoblaugh, an Associated Press reporter, writes in his book, *Correspondent in Spain,* that Caballero himself in 1935 modestly admitted he would be the Spanish Lenin. The AP carried the story. It is on record too that Araquistain deliberately fostered that title among the laboring classes through his magazine *Leviaton* and his paper *Claridad.* The Spanish proletariat, like workingmen all over the world, had grown to revere the Russian leader.

Caballero fell. Why? Because he lost the confidence of the people and of his collaborators. He fell in the same manner that all cabinets fall in capitalist democracies. Araquistain is quite right in saying the Communists objected to the way Caballero prosecuted the war. So did 90 percent of the rest of republican Spain. Araquistain fails to mention that. Caballero had lost Malaga without a shot. The loyalists continued their disastrous retreat in the north. Caballero battled the idea of a unified command with all of a frustrated old man's vindictiveness. He even fought against the consolidation of the militia into a regular army. Caballero tried to buck history; every student knows what happens to politicians who stand in the way of historic necessity.

Consider what Herbert L. Matthews, now the New York *Times* correspondent in Rome, had to write about this period in his book *Two Wars and More to Come.*

> Malaga fell, an easy prey to the Italians. There had been treachery on the loyalist side, and fearful incompetence for which Largo Caballero, again, must assume responsibility. As Minister of War he should not have permitted the front to remain with few men, virtually unfortified, and unsupplied with war materials. There was a political and moral revulsion after that which was to prove the end, in time, of Largo Caballero and his clique.

Will Sr. Araquistain and his junta now tell us that Mr. Matthews received "orders from Moscow" to write that and that Mr. Sulzberger got orders from Moscow to print such dispatches?

Matthews and Jellinek

The key to Araquistain's and Caballero's behavior is their original animus against the People's Front. They loathed that political instrument with a passion that far transcended their hatred of fascism. Witness their loving-kindness toward the POUM, that Trotskyist cabal that sought to undermine the People's Front. Araquistain—and Caballero—pretend to believe that the POUM was merely "a small leftist Spanish workmen's party sympathizing with Leon Trotsky." (*New Leader,* June 9th.) Arsenic is merely a liquid that comes in neat little bottles. The republic's police have dossiers upon the POUM. The record is extant for anybody who wishes to discover the truth. But let Mr. Matthews of the New York *Times* continue his story:

> The showdown [with Caballero] came early in May with a sanguinary uprising [by the POUM —J. N.] in Barcelona and many small towns, engineered partly with fascist money, and to that extent treasonous. More than any man he [Caballero] was responsible for the poor showing which the loyalists were making from Guadalajara on. Unable to grasp the necessity for moderation and discipline, the Premier had lost the support of his Socialist and Communist followers while the more moderate elements were openly attacking him. Having no support in what may be called the center and right wing of the Popular Front, he was forced to curry favor with the anarchists. When the Catalan uprising discredited them thoroughly it was inevitable that he should go down with them.

Orders from Moscow? A Communist plot? Let us read what Frank Jellinek, *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, has to say in his book *The War in Spain.*

> In the face of the tragic experience of Malaga, the great mass of the people wanted unity of command, discipline, patriotism, and a spirit of self-sacrifice. The Communist Party very intelligently made itself the champion of these demands. It organized a great popular demonstration in Valencia calling for unity of command. The Caballero group immediately started talking of "Communist intrigues" and "orders from Moscow."

So much for Sr. Caballero. Now about the Communists in Spain. Historians have recorded the policy of that party: Did it seek to control the scene, to wrest power, to set up a "dictatorship of the proletariat"?

The Communist Policy

The Communist Party endlessly repeated that the war was one of democracy against fascism. The party subordinated its ultimate aims for the immediate national popular needs: Believing the People's Front was the instrument to achieve this victory, it battled endlessly for the unification of all democratic groupings. Any dispassionate observer recorded that the party, more than any other, labored to dispel the suspicions engendered by the hard-bitten Bakuninism which commanded a half-century's tradition in Spain. It endeavored to win the energetic support for the democratic People's Front of the bourgeois democrats, the Left Republicans, the Catalan Esquerra, and all Catalan and Basque nationalist parties. But let Jose Diaz speak for his party, which he led so ably all during the war:

> The policy of the Communist Party is and should be a firm, consistent People's Front policy. . . . The

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party should not take any action which might be detrimental to the unity of all anti-fascist forces.

Senator George Branting, of Sweden, a leading Social-Democrat, said in his report to the *International Food Commission for Spain*:

I want to emphasize that it is utterly false to pretend that the firm course followed by President Negrin was supported only by the Communists. It is quite certain that the Negrin government was supported by all parties of the Popular Front.

The Popular Front has been violently assaulted from the right and the spurious left—the anti-Comintern axis and the Trotskyites. They have a very genuine fear of its powers. To undermine it in the eyes of all middle-class allies of labor, they tried to dub the People's Front a "Communistic" plot. Obviously Trotskyist-inclined, Caballero and Araquistain have always attacked the People's Front from the "left." Araquistain reveals his hand in the current issue of the Trotskyist-influenced *New Leader:*

The so-called United Front is an illusion. . . . The Spanish example has proved that the Popular Front tactic is merely another Communist trick. It was their tactics to try to capture absolute power by this means.

But who did try to capture "absolute power" in May 1937? The POUM. Who defended the POUM? Srs. Araquistain and Caballero, according to their own eloquent testimony. Q.E.D.?

SOVIET AID

Finally, the weary lies about the Soviet Union. Ask the Spanish folk who proved their most reliable friends during the war. The position of the Spanish government officials on aid from the USSR has been about as follows:

Italian and German material reached Franco late in July, 1936, ten days after the war began. The first Russian material arrived in October. In the interim the non-intervention agreement had denied the legally elected Spanish government the right to buy arms in defense of democracy. The Soviet Union *restored* that right.

The axis powers have labored ceaselessly to present Soviet aid in a sinister light. Now Araquistain adds to that clamor. But the Soviet Union never acted outside of international law. It exhorted, pleaded, in the person of Maisky in London, Litvinov in Geneva, through its press generally, that France, England, the USA accord Spain its legal rights. This is no secret. Look at the record. Time and again before the Non-Intervention Committee the Soviet representatives made speeches like the following:

The Soviet Union is not willing to remain in the position of involuntarily supporting an injustice, and it sees only one way out of the situation which has arisen: to restore to the Spanish government the right and the possibility of purchasing arms outside Spain, a right which all other governments throughout the world possess, and to leave it to the signatories to the agreement whether they wish to sell arms to the Spanish government or not. In any case, the Soviet government which is not prepared to bear any further responsibility to the creation of a situation which is obviously unjust to the Spanish government, feels itself compelled to declare that it does not consider itself bound to the non-intervention agreement in any greater degree than any other signatories.

Heil Buddha!

Nowadays when Hitler plans some move
not on the level,
He never has to fight: just sits and
contemplates his Neville.

ROBERT MELTZER.

And why did the Soviet Union aid Spain? Here is the reason, according to this same Soviet representative at a session of the London committee as early as October 1936:

If . . . the rebellious generals should be victorious, the same generals who are being supported by certain states against their solemn undertakings of non-intervention, then not only would Spain suffer terribly under an internal catastrophe, but the whole European situation would be very greatly worsened, because the victory of the rebellious generals . . . would act as a tremendous impetus for the loosing of all the forces of aggression, hatred, and destruction in Europe, and the danger of a new great war would have advanced to the threshold of our own houses.

This, and this alone, is the main reason why the Soviet government and the peoples of the Soviet Union are so deeply interested in the events which are at present taking place in Spain. The policy of peace consistently pursued by the peoples of the Soviet Union determines the present attitude of the Soviet Union to the events taking place in Spain.

Who made these declarations, carried the issue to the international press, waged incessant battle for Spain's rights in the world arena? Chamberlain? Bonnet? Blum? Or the representative of the Soviet Union? Strange conduct indeed for a nation "which did not want Spain to win."

It makes little difference to Araquistain, Caballero, and the tory-Trotskyist cabal that Stalin declared to the world that "the liberation of Spain from the oppression of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of Spaniards but the common cause of all advanced and progressive mankind." Merely another wily trick of the machiavellian Georgian.

What did happen? On Oct. 15, 1936, the first food ship left the Soviet Union for Spain. The boat was followed by many others. Soviet factories took the orders for clothes and shoes for the Spanish children with tremendous enthusiasm and carried them out with magnificent elan. By the end of 1936 alone, over 47,000,000 roubles had been collected in the Soviet Union through the Soviet labor unions. Mr. Araquistain does not consider it important to mention that the motorship *Komsomol* was sunk by a "mysterious" submarine or that the treacherous Bonnet threatened time and again—and did—close the border to all supplies coming to republican Spain. On the other hand, Araquistain fails to mention the magnificent service offered Spain by the Soviet Chatos and Mouskas, those fighting airships that drove from the skies the German and Italian planes that had been diligently bombing women and children in schools, homes, and hospitals.

The Russians wanted to dominate the scene? The GPU overran republican Iberia? Early in 1938 the government asked that all foreigners be withdrawn from both sides. On September 21, Negrin at Geneva offered to withdraw the International Brigade from the republican ranks. On Jan. 16, 1939 a League of Nations commission completed this withdrawal. They reported that there were 12,493 volunteers from twenty-nine countries. They reported no Russians.

To summarize. When the war broke out fifteen Communists sat in the Cortes, which numbered 473 deputies. None in the cabinet. The Negrin cabinet included *two* Communists at first. Later, after the coast was cut, there was *one,* Sr. Uribe, Minister of Agriculture. There were ten members of the cabinet. Communist domination? Soviet domination? Oh, these endless, repetitious lies of the disgruntled, the befuddled, and of those actually in the pay of the axis powers!

What lost the war, Sr. Araquistain? In the last analysis, the terrible inferiority in material. It reached a ratio of 8 to 1 in the last days. The government, hamstrung by the monstrous non-intervention agreements, found itself unable to obtain sufficient material for successful resistance. Due to the magnificent elan of the People's Front—due to its construction of a native war industry—due to the aid the Soviet people were able to send despite the mountainous obstacles—due to the aid the democratic people of all lands shipped to Spain—it held out for nearly three years. Who lost the war, Sr. Araquistain? We may as well ask Herr Goebbels. The answer would be the same.

JOSEPH NORTH.

Churchill on the USSR

"PERSONALLY, not having changed my views about communism or past history in any respect, I have from the beginning preferred the Russian proposals to either the British or French alternatives. They are simple, they are logical, and they conform to the main groupings of common interest.

"Nor should there be any serious difficulty in guaranteeing the Baltic states and Finland. The Russian claim that these should be included in the triple guaranty is well-founded. There is no sense in having a crack in the peace diving bell."—Winston Churchill, New York *Herald Tribune.*

Shots at Tea Time

"ITALY'S taking Albania ruined the English Easter holiday."—London Letter in the *New Yorker.*

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The Tories Tune Up

In training for the coming conventions, the Republicans and Garnercrats sharpen their axes for the people.

Washington.

THE Republicans are all set to go. They've got their national committee publicity staff all built up; they've gained a little practical experience from National Debt Week (and their faces are still red), and they've got Elizabeth Dilling's *Red Network* on all the key desks in their shiny, bright office. They're all set for the 1940 campaign.

There's just one big stumbling block in their way, and they don't know what to do about it. It's that tiny matter of a candidate. It isn't that they don't have any, Lord knows. There are more hats in the ring than there are herrings in the sea. And therein lies the trouble. The committee can't really begin functioning until it is decided just which of all the candidates they'll get behind.

When in the past there has been only one outstanding candidate, the committee has usually begun to loose its publicity barrage long before the nominating convention has affixed its formal stamp of approval on the blessed one. That was the way of 1928 and 1932, and, to a lesser degree, of 1936. But it is not the way of 1940. For with all the little Lancelots out to save the world from the Red Menace of Rooseveltism, the tory camp would be riven and sundered if the national committee should do any picking beforehand.

The Republicans have traditionally held their convention during the first week in June of the election year, and, traditionally, they have been followed within two weeks by the Democrats. Next year, however, promises to see some traditions shattered. For the Republicans have decided to stand aside and let the Democrats go first. The after-you-my-dear-Alphonse gesture is motivated, not by courtesy, but by sheer hard-boiled politics. For Republican strategy in the forthcoming elections is almost wholly contingent upon developments in the Democratic ranks. If Roosevelt dominates the convention and the Garnercrats walk out, their strategy will be one thing; if Garner wins, and the progressives form a third party, it will be another; if Roosevelt wins and the Garnercrats decide at the last minute to stick, they'll have to figure out a third strategy; and if the Democrats patch it up around a compromise candidate, the Republicans will have to worry out still a fourth plan of battle. So they're going to play a waiting game.

But out of this may come a novel and fascinating bit of political swordplay. Roosevelt, as leader of his party, will have pretty much the final word on the calling of the Democratic convention. He may well feel that the waiting game also plays into his hands, nce it stalls the final jelling of the opposition, oe it Democrat or Republican. And therefore he, too, may postpone the traditional meeting of the nominating convention. It may then become a question of who can hold off longest.

SHAFER, THORKELSON, MCWHIRTER

The Republican national committee last year paid $1,000 into the election war chest of Paul Shafer of Michigan. Shafer has admitted—by inference at least—that he is the Congressional leader of Michigan's Silver Shirts. Abstract theorizing might conceive a causal relationship. Especially when, coupled with it, the committee laid out $500 to elect Representative Thorkelson of Montana. Thorkelson celebrated May 1 by making a speech on the floor of the House in which he quoted from that hoary anti-Semitic forgery, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. He also sat as close right-hand adviser to White-Horse Moseley, during the General's command performance before the Dies Committee. Felix McWhirter, Indiana banker and close friend of anti-Semites, is still treasurer of the Indiana Republican state committee. The Republicans evidently find his views not entirely incompatible with their own.

GARNER'S PROPHECY

It has long been suspected, but it can now be reliably reported that Garner is wielding the knife in the back of the La Follette committee. Earlier this session, Garner took occasion at one of the cabinet meetings to pound the table vociferously and swear up and down that the La Follette committee would die with this Congress, and that the Dies committee would take its place. From all present indications, unless tremendous pressure is exerted in the few remaining weeks, his prediction will be fulfilled.

PAUL G. MCMANUS.

Gardner Rea

MAJOR NERTZ OF THE FASCIST SHIRTS
"By Gad, the barricades shan't find us unprepared, eh, Jorrocks?"

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The Tientsin Incident

THE Japanese know their Chamberlain. Less than a week after Lord Halifax, British Foreign Minister, and Chamberlain made their latest appeasement overtures, declaring their readiness to "explore the whole problem of economic *Lebensraum*," the Japanese instituted a blockade of the British and French concessions at Tientsin. Apparently there is no *Lebensraum* (living space) like the British empire itself.

The pretext for this twisting of the lion's tail was the refusal of the British authorities to give up four Chinese who were charged by the Japanese with assassinating one of their Chinese puppets. However, within a few days after the establishment of the blockade a curious paradox developed. The Japanese, usually so punctilious in such matters, seemed to be making every effort to discard this pretext, while the British, on the other hand, were taking pains to maintain the fiction that the Japanese were merely demanding satisfaction for a minor incident. For once truth lies with the aggressor. "This is no mere local issue," declared the commander of Japan's North China army. "The crux of the question is whether Britain is ready to make unqualified revision of her China policy." And the Chamberlain government's reluctance to undertake those economic reprisals which could smash the blockade has only encouraged the Japanese in the belief that if they twist the lion's tail hard enough, he will do everything they ask.

The measures taken by the Japanese military are, as one newspaper describes them, acts of war. And they are directed not only at the British, but at all democratic countries with interests in the Far East. The United States is so directly threatened that even the ultra-isolationist New York *Daily News* has found it necessary to urge a joint British-American blockade of the Japanese empire.

It is obvious that the Japanese move in China has been synchronized with events in Europe. By its failure to conclude a military alliance with the Soviet Union, Britain has tied its own hands in both Europe and Asia. Cooperation among the fascist aggressors plus division among the democratic countries produced Tientsin as inevitably as it produced the annexations of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Albania.

Bloom Bill

THE Japanese putsch at Tientsin should speed revision of our Neutrality act. The Bloom bill reported by the House Foreign Affairs Committee is a step backward from the policy outlined by President Roosevelt in his message at the opening of Congress, but a step forward from the present law. If properly amended, the bill can be an effective instrument in promoting peace. Even at best, however, it would need to be implemented by a more energetic policy of cooperation with Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and other peace-loving states.

The Bloom bill embodies the "cash-and-carry" principles which have also been incorporated in the measure sponsored by Senator Pittman. It would permit trade in all materials with all belligerents provided right, title, and interest in the products is transferred to some foreign government or agency. Since Britain and France dominate the Atlantic, the bill would aid these countries in the event of war with Germany and Italy. For similar reasons, however, it would benefit Japan in the Pacific to the detriment of China—and the United States. It is in this respect that the measure is most in need of amendment.

According to figures released by the Chinese Council for Economic Research in Washington, the United States supplied Japan in 1938 with 57.07 percent of its imports of essential war materials, excluding cotton. Just how the American people feel about this is evident from the latest Gallup poll which shows that 66 percent of the voters would join in a movement to boycott Japanese goods, while 72 percent favor a government embargo on military supplies.

Coughlin Thugs

THE growing insolence of Coughlinite fascists in street corner assaults is a fact generally going unnoticed by the press. In New York bands of thugs accompanying *Social Justice* salesmen have attacked casual passersby; at least three stabbings by Fr. Coughlin's knownothings have occurred recently; and the old Mussolini blackshirt technique of raiding meeting places of progressives has been put to use. A Communist headquarters in the Bronx was besieged last week. Members of the "Christian Front," complete with the Hitler salute, attempted to break up a street rally of the American Labor Party in the Bronx. City Councilman Michael Quill kept the labor forces steady despite having a milk bottle thrown at him while he was speaking.

The ominous first skirmishes of the era of street fighting have been set in motion by the Coughlin Nazis. Police protection has been efficiently extended, but only after the fact. It is no mystery to anyone but Norman Thomas that these attacks are a deliberate piece of Coughlin's campaign. Mr. Thomas last week wrote a sweet letter to Father Coughlin, inviting the microphone dominie to disclaim responsibility for the disorders, or else the Socialist leader would be very hurt. Father Coughlin will undoubtedly oblige. Practical democrats, however, are urging prosecution of the thugs and steps to prevent the repetition of their activities.

Carney, Weddell, Suner

IF YOU are an American citizen, you cannot use the telephone in Spain to call from one town or city to another and speak in your own language. If you are an American citizen working in Spain, you cannot leave the country even for a short period. If you are an American citizen, you cannot enter Spain, unless two good fascists testify for you as an upholder of Franco. If you are an American citizen working for the telephone company in Madrid, you aren't able to go near your office, because Franco is still shooting the Spanish employees of that company; they were not traitors to their republic.

These facts were reported calmly by William P. Carney, the American fifth columnist of the New York *Times* last Monday. More, such restrictions were defended by the American ambassador to Franco, Alexander W. Weddell, whom the *Times* reports as saying;

> I think that right after going through a bitter civil war the authorities are fully justified in satisfying themselves about the past or probable future political activities and connections of foreigners who now wish to take up residence in Spain.

To visit Spain you must believe anti-Semitically, like Serrano Suner, Spanish Interior Minister and brother-in-law of Franco, who recently stated:

> Spain's people are prepared for privations. With the same force with which they broke the ring of steel that surrounded them on the battlefield, they will break those other rings that a hostile Judaism is trying to place across their path.

Apparently Ambassador Weddell approves the imprisonment and murder of hundreds of thousands of Spanish republican citizens and finds nothing objectionable in the anti-Semitic policies of the Franc regime.

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No Tax Munich

A MAJOR premise of reaction in the 1940 elections will be that New Deal taxes have prevented business recovery. Not only is this a wrong premise, but it is a terribly wrong and mistaken tactic for the New Deal to grant to reaction this major premise.

It is bad enough that the tax bill jammed through the House of Representatives would substantially reduce government revenue, claims to the contrary notwithstanding. Although the capital-gains and undistributed-profits taxes—which are abolished in the new tax bill—were not important sources of revenue of themselves, they were important methods of preventing evasion of the personal and corporation income taxes, and their abolition will result in substantial reductions in these major sources of government income. Furthermore, a campaign is under way to open new avenues for evasion by allowing corporations to carry over from one year to another "operating losses." This is just inviting further evasion by financial juggling and the establishing of wholly fictitious operating losses. These changes—plus the increase in local taxation for relief which would be caused by any reduction in WPA—will, if enacted, greatly increase the burden of taxation on the common people, and relieve only the very rich.

No tax Munich, Mr. President. Stand by the principles you announced recently—no reduction in government revenue; no greater tax burdens on the common people, or on small business; no loopholes for tax-evasion by the wealthy.

Student Mamlock

IN GERMANY they have many ways of handling Jews. Murder is the simplest. But there are others far worse: Dachau, the spiriting away or torture of loved ones, brutal humiliation. The world knows the last way best, for many of its victims have escaped and told what they went through. For millions it was symbolized in the Soviet motion picture *Professor Mamlock,* when the old scientist was forced to walk through the streets with "Jude" scrawled in blood across his frock.

Last week the Nazi octopus tossed a tentacle across the Atlantic, and millions of Americans saw how contemporary barbarism handles minorities. Melvin Bridge was not an eminent scientist—he was not even an adult. He was a Jewish student in a junior high school in a suburb of Baltimore, but he might as well have been in Berlin. They took a red-hot poker, dug it into his neck, and branded him with an H—Hebrew. A group of school boys did the job, but no one believes that it started with them. A great argument against racism is that children do not know of it and never practice it without being taught and goaded by others. The branding of Melvin Bridge was engineered by Nazis.

An indigenous and older form of anti-Semitic humiliation came to light in the same state in the same week. Jay Allen Einstein, a second-year man at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, was told by superiors that if he expected to "get ahead" in the Navy, he would do well to change his name. They suggested that the name Easton would be suitable.

Both incidents have horrified America. Young boys torturing a young boy because of his race is an ugly picture; the suggestion that one bearing the name of Einstein cannot get ahead is ironic. Nazi activity in the schools, anti-Semitism in the Navy—fascism in two arms of democratic defense.

Hunger by Legislation

IF HOOVER'S apple proved poor election bait in 1932, it will be less than that in 1940. The reactionaries are more than suspect in their ghoulish zeal to slash the lifeline of upwards of two million Americans. They sow the seed of fascism in our economic soil. The storm of protest at the fearfully inadequate Woodrum proposals wrought some ineffectual changes at the last minute—raising the ceiling on WPA projects from $25,000 to $40,000 and removing the cost limitation on federal power projects. But that's a sop which will neither satisfy nor fool anybody.

Actually, if the Senate passes the Woodrum bill, not a man or woman in the wage-earning and lower-salaried categories will escape the dismal effects of the drive organized by the "economy" bloc—those spendthrifts of the lives and dignity of millions of Americans. The lower middle class and those immediately above that category will feel it in increased taxation for local relief. Merchants will find their business drastically reduced as the spenders carry home empty pocketbooks. A generation of artists and professionals face immediate penury—no, starvation is the word—if such projects as the Federal Theater are abandoned.

Present relief rolls will be cut by more than a third; no provision for able-bodied family heads in most of the states means immediately empty cupboards. PWA appropriations cut to $125,000,000 predicate the abandonment of many, probably most, of the major construction endeavors the cities have counted on. Paul Kellogg, president of the National Conference of Social Work, earnestly warns against scrapping the WPA. George Addes, secretary-treasurer of the CIO United Automobile Workers, declares the only hope for continuation of WPA lies in the solidarity of the industrial and unemployed workers behind the Casey bill, which provides for an appropriation of $2,250,000,000 and the employment of three million workers on WPA.

All progressives must heed the advice of Kellogg and Addes. The New Deal is under the heaviest fire today since Roosevelt took office. And one cannot forget this: the Republicans would never have dared bring that "economy ax" down with such force had it not been for the Garnercrats. The 170 House Republicans moved forward behind the reactionary Democrats. Woodrum did Hoover's work for him. Today the issue is in the laps of the Senate. It is not too late. The politicians must be made to understand that the people know 1940 is drawing nearer. Unfortunately hunger and deprivation of human dignity are also closer. But there is still time: the Casey bill is the answer.

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What's On Your Mind?

A. Landy discusses middle-class frustration, Marxism and psychiatry, the death of Ernst Toller.

QUESTIONS on various topics continue to arrive, some of them on themes that have been answered before in this department. We invite you to send in your questions; we shall make every effort to answer them promptly and satisfactorily.

Should any inquirer feel that he needs further details than the ones published under this department head, we will be glad to forward them upon request.

Q. In working to improve the material lot of the people, Marxism has assumed that all other aspects of their lives would improve. Doesn't the unhappiness of large numbers of middle-class people, which is not due to hunger, prove that emotional disturbances may exist without material misery, and that we need a special technique, a Marxian psychiatry, to deal with this? Doesn't the case of Ernst Toller show that the movement has neglected something important here?—J. G.

A. Marxism recognizes the determining effect which the material conditions have on men's lives. But its understanding of the nature of these conditions and the manner of their influence is quite different from that attributed to it in the question. As a matter of fact, the conclusions implied in this question rest upon two assumptions, neither of which is in accord with the facts. The first is that hunger is the only material circumstance affecting the happiness or welfare of people, and that the influence of the material conditions is always direct and simple. The second is that the middle class is suffering only from emotional difficulties and that these difficulties are the product of some sort of virgin conception unrelated to the affairs of the mundane world.

Aside from the fact that, if either of these assumptions were true, they would cancel one another, we are asked to believe that the working masses represent one category of human beings moved and motivated only by crude, animal necessities, while middle-class people represent a category of a higher order motivated only by spiritual impulses. This conclusion, while evidently unintentional and not explicitly formulated in the question, is the unavoidable consequence of its assumptions.

However, a glance at the underlying proposition of the materialist conception of history will show immediately that Marxism moves in other directions. This proposition states that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." Far from neglecting an important feature of human behavior, therefore, Marxism actually makes it possible to understand the correct relationship between the material conditions and the intellectual activities and emotional life of men.

The fact that Ernst Toller did not suffer financial want does not mean that his suicide was without an objective cause. On the contrary, Toller was decidedly a victim of fascist barbarism. Of course, had he been a Marxist-Leninist, he would have continued the struggle despite all difficulties. A Marxist understands that, aside from true pathological cases, emotional disturbances of socio-economic origin will disappear only with the abolition of the social conditions which give rise to them. What is needed, therefore, is not a special therapy for the restoration of unbalanced souls. The real need is to organize the struggle against these conditions, to apply Marxism, by drawing these people into the struggle against capitalist reaction and fascism; to have faith in the power of the masses, and, anchoring this faith in scientific certainty, to learn how to carry the struggle to a successful conclusion.

The Russian Bolsheviks never lost confidence in the future of the working class, and they were victorious. They derived this confidence from the knowledge that society could not develop without ultimately producing the conditions for the victory of the people. They did not succumb to moods, but, in the face of temporary defeats, learned how to retreat in order to prepare for a new advance. The Russian Bolsheviks have demonstrated to the whole world the great, creative power of Marxism. They have taught us how to transform difficulties into opportunities, how to master circumstances rather than be mastered by them. And they have drawn their inspiration for all this from their profound faith in the masses, from their scientific knowledge that the future belongs to the people. Can anyone imagine that victory is possible without this?

A. LANDY.

READER'S FORUM

The Iowa Scene

N.F. gives us a glimpse of the healthy open spaces out in Iowa.

"Often I have wished that some of you editors could come out here to live for a while. Impossible of course, for it is so far away from the America that you know. But on this Iowa farmland you would discover a people who love their country; what is more important however, you would find a people who have not lost sight of the outside world and their place in it, and who are aware that there are other folks in other lands who have problems.

"About five miles from where I sit, a camp for German refugees has opened. The folks out here remembered that they had a few buildings that weren't being used, you see.

"One of the farmers sat down on his front porch in the evening, and thought about those people who were being turned out of their own land. He read all about it—well, anyway, something about it—in the local newspaper. He looked across the new brown dirt of his farm and wondered how he'd feel in 'their boots?'

"Some time later, if you editors had passed by his community, you would have seen groups of men leave their farms after sundown, hammer and nails in hand. If you had listened, you would have heard the sound of reconstruction on some houses—unused remnants of an old Quaker seminary.

"Over fifty homeless men, outcasts in a land that gave them birth, are finding a new world opening for them in Iowa. To understand something of the real story behind these people, it will do you no good to ask them questions. Their lips are sealed.

"Perhaps they find their lips sealed through the

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memory of suffering; you might get more out of them in a city, but being out here on the land makes a person less talkative. Perhaps they remember the faces of others less fortunate. Or again, it might be fear that keeps them in the ranks of the silent.

"Pay them a visit, and I can tell you—you'll learn a lot from what you read in the eyes of these people, after they've been on the land for a while.

"The best way is to take Emil aside, out onto the porch of a farm where we are being quietly entertained. Into our hands are thrust two large cuts of pie. The kind of apple pie incomparably put together by the rugged hands of an Iowa farmer's life. With our hands pleasantly filled, we can walk out on the stubby grass plot fronting the main house.

"For a moment Emil forgets the land across the sea, as he gazes in admiration over the dark brown earth, furrowed over low rolling hills, with here and there another white house; another farm like this; another farmer's wife, smilingly ready to hand us a piece of her new-baked pie, if we should chance to drop in. Perhaps an artist, Mr. Grant Wood, could understand what I mean. Emil would; it means a lot to him.

"Then, as we watch our friend his face changes to take on a sad expression. It will take several years to wipe away the vision of sorrow reflected there.

"Looking over the landscape he had seen life. But yet, as he watched, a cloud had swept over the hills until, coming ever closer it took strange forms —but no unfamiliar forms to Emil.

"He watched it take the shape of a concentration camp—smashed windows and the cry 'Der Jude' came out of the mist—a picture of passports roughly handled—huddled people at a border crossing—a farewell to old friends.

"The clouds moved nearer, sweeping in memory back over the sweet new soil toward us—standing on the grass plot in front of an Iowa farmhouse—and Emil turns with a frightened look on his face, while in his eyes can be seen the image of a swastika.

"It's great to be in Iowa ,and it's wonderful to know that Iowa is in America. The people on the land out here are beginning to see the cloud. Not all of them, but a few.

"If you could come to the far Midwest, Mr. Editors you would see new facets of American thinking. I can't help but feel that living in the city, ll its cultural advantages, makes you lose ing of the feel for a people. After two years here, I feel that there is a true bigness in these wa men of the land. If the cloud which Emil aw really does come over our hills, let us not sit looking the other way, hoping that it will pass over our little plot of ground. Let's not ignore the weather man when he tells us that storm clouds may be expected!

"Let's not take comfort in the thought that the roof of our house is pretty waterproof, while saying to our neighbors that 'it's too bad your houses appear to be tumbling down.' Let's be neighborly, get out on the roof and strengthen it; help our neighbors strengthen their roofs. If the cloud breaks it may then be piped away to the nearest river, if there's an overflow, and so be carried away to the sea—the final resting place for all rotten ships.

"Yes, I wish you could meet these people out here. They will put your hand on the pulse of the nation. They aren't sure about that cloud coming yet, but if it is pointed out to them as coming closer—if they realize that it may come to wash their heritage down the hillsides into the gullies—they'll be at your side, Mr. Editors!"

A LETTER FROM A NOTED SOUTHERN EDITOR

Charleston, West Virginia
June 14, 1939

New Masses:

Here is my modest contribution to the Sustaining Fund. And with the money, let me contribute a few words.

It is unthinkable that the New Masses, so alert and so vital to a correct understanding of the times, should falter, not to mention fail. The magazine must be supported on the cultural front by the many in ordinary pursuits behind the lines -- pursuits which depend for their peaceful continuance on the success of such battles as the New Masses is fighting.

In these confused times, when civilization almost every day faces a new Munich in some vital sphere, I have noted with gratitude and pride the everlasting correctness of the New Masses lowdown on issues, men and events.

The magazine should have not only a sustaining fund, not merely a periodic scotching against its slipping back, but a popular subsidy in the form of prompt renewals and new thousands of readers.

Every subscriber should urge others to subscribe, just as all are urged to buy Liberty Bonds in time of war. For, who longer doubts -- who but those who read untruth, that a war is on in the world, even within our own borders, a war against culture and the liberties of the many? So far in our own land it is mainly a war of words -- of truth against lies, of light against darkness, of democracy against fascist tendencies, with injustice and reaction's violence existing only where lies and darkness prevail.

The Word! It can not take wings from the mouth only. It must multiply on tens of thousands of printed pages, for these pages can make millions of mouths talk! The word has always been more powerful than the sword -- when the word had wings. The New Masses sends, and can increasingly send, winged words which will help to undo the brute force of the cynical few who wage war on mankind only when the many are ignorant or misled.

The imperative need, then, is behind-the-lines support...great mass subsidy...liberty bonds... for the New Masses in its unexampled service to the people.

Bruce Crawford

Bruce Crawford.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

By Dorothy Parker and Sylvia Townsend Warner

Dorothy Parker's subject is "Sophisticated Poetry—and the Hell with it." Sylvia Townsend Warner tells a story of cultural regimentation under the swastika.

DOROTHY PARKER and Sylvia Townsend Warner were among the distinguished writers who addressed the recent Third American Writers Congress. Their spoken pieces make good reading on pertinent phases of literature today.

NEW MASSES presents first Dorothy Parker's remarks on her fellow versifiers who grew up out of the jazz age of "sophistication."

I don't think any word in the language has a horrider connotation than "sophisticate," which ranks about along with "socialite." The real dictionary meaning is none too attractive. The verb means: to mislead, to deprive of simplicity, make artificial, to tamper with, for purpose of argument; to adulterate. You'd think that was enough, as far as it goes, but it has gone farther. Now it appears to mean: to be an intellectual and emotional isolationist; to sneer at those who do their best for their fellows and for their world; to look always down and never around; to laugh only at those things that are not funny.

Out in Hollywood, where the streets are paved with Goldwyn, the word "sophisticated" means, very simply, "obscure." A sophisticated story is a dirty story. Some of that meaning has wafted eastward and got itself mixed up into the present definition—so that a "sophisticate" means: one who dwells in a tower made of a du Pont substitute for ivory, and holds a glass of flat champagne in one hand and an album of dirty postcards in the other.

A sophisticate is, in fact, a rather less expensive edition of what a cynic used to be. And while we're up—whatever became of cynicism, anyway? It's as dated, now, as pyrography. Not far enough in the past to be quaint or picturesque or even a little touching. It is just dowdy—that's all. It just can't last.

When I started writing verse—at about the time the glacier had just swung over Central Park—there were hundreds, maybe thousands engaged in the manufacture of light verse; and there were just as few poets as there always will be. I don't mean there is any disgrace attached to the writing of light verse, any more than there is any disgrace about painting on china. But few specimens of either fancywork survive. And there aren't many new ones being made. There are few new writers of light verse, just as there are few new writers of humorous pieces coming along. If there were any demand, there would be a supply. But these are not the days for little, selfish, timid things.

Back in those early times, everybody wrote very nice light verse. We were careful about our quantities, and we rhymed the first and third lines of quatrains, and we were neat about masculine and feminine endings and all that. We even got into the French forms, and turned out ballades and rondeaux, and sometimes actually a chant royale or a rondeau redouble after which we would have to go lie down in a dark room for a while and put wet cloths on our heads.

And we chose for our subjects our dislike of parsley as a garnish, or of nutmeg in rice pudding, or of wrong telephone numbers, or of women's current fashions, or of certain popular cliches of speech, or of those who made mistakes at the bridge table. It was all on that scale. All you can say is, it didn't do any harm, and it was work that didn't roughen our hands or your mind; just as you can say of knitting. Which is fun to do, too—

DOROTHY PARKER. *She tells about the "sophisticated" age of poetry.*

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER. *Tells an anecdote of Nazi Germany to prove a point.*

Then something happened to the light verse writers—especially to the ladies among us. It may have been the result of the World War—after all, that must have had *some* result—or it may have been the effect of Miss Edna St. V. Millay and that badly burning candle of hers. Anyway, we grew dashing and devil-may-care. We came right out in rhyme and acknowledged we hadn't been virgins for quite a while—whether we had or not. We let it be known our hearts broke much oftener than the classic once. We sang that just because we'd been out with a slant-eyed youth all last night there wasn't any reason why we shouldn't take up with a whistling lad tonight. We were gallant and hard-riding and careless of life. We sneered *in numbers* in loping rhythms at the straight and the sharp and the decent. We were little black ewes that had gone astray; we were a sort of ladies' auxiliary of the legion of the damned. And boy, were we proud of our shame! When Gertrude Stein spoke of a "lost generation," we took it to ourselves and considered it the prettiest compliment we had.

I think the trouble with us was that we stayed young too long. We remained in the smarty-pants stage—and that is not one of the more attractive ages. We were little individuals; and when we finally came to and got out it was quite a surprise to find a whole world full of human beings all around us. "How long," we said to ourselves, "has this been going on? And why didn't somebody tell us about it before?"

I think the best thing about writers now is that they grow up sooner. They know you cannot find yourself until you find your fellow men—they know there is no longer "I"; there is "we." They know that a hurt heart or a curiosity about death or an admiration for the crescent moon is purely a personal matter. It is no longer the time for personal matters—thank God! Now the poet speaks not just for himself but for all of us—and so his voice is heard, and so his song goes on.

But the songs of my time are as dead as Iris March. The day of the individual is dead. You know the mighty words of Joe Hill: "Don't Mourn. Organize!"

DOROTHY PARKER.

Sylvia Townsend Warner, the creator of *Lolly Willowes* and *Mr. Fortune's Maggot*, etc., told an interesting story as her contribution to the Writers Congress. Here it is:

MY TRADE is writing, not politics. It is easier for me to tell a story than to make a speech. And so I will tell a story. It is the story of a woman who went to Germany.

Nobody now goes to Germany with an impartial mind. This woman went there with a prejudice in favor of the Nazi regime. For what we have heard of the Nazi regime, she said, is the evidence of its victims. And the evidence of victims is not good evidence. It is an argument.

She went to stay in the country, she took lodgings in a village. Her first morning there she was awakened by the sound of marching feet and singing. She jumped up and looked out of the window. Boys were marching by, and as they marched they sang a German folk song. The early morning sun shone on their tanned faces and on the polished spades they carried on their shoulders, as one carries a gun. It was a group of young people doing their period of national service on the land. How excellent, she thought. They come from towns and cities. They work in the open air, doing work of service to their country. They are sunburned, disciplined, early-rising; and they sing for happiness. Every morning she heard them go by at the same hour, always singing the same tune. And then she noticed

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something. Not only was it always the same song; but as they went by under her window it was always the same verse of the song.

All her illusions fell away. This singing, that had sounded so good to her, had no meaning, no music in it. It was lifeless, false, mechanical. It was wound up every morning like a machine. It was worse than a chain gang. For in a chain gang the song is raised spontaneously. But here, even the song was in chains.

Some come by their opinions slowly, some by a lightning flash. The woman who told me this story needed no further evidence. In that moment of realization she turned with all her heart against fascism. And observe, what moved her could scarcely be called the evidence of victims. But I ask you to bear in mind that the victims of fascism are not only those in exile, in concentration camps, in graves. It is the inherent curse of fascism, the brand of Cain stamped through and through it, that is as deadly to those it would cherish as to those it would destroy.

Some it will kill, and others it will keep alive. But those it keeps alive are doomed to a negation of true living. They learn a mechanical hatred, a mechanical patriotism, a mechanical joy in life that has no more significance than the screaming of steam-engine music at a fair.

How can we not hate this system that teaches race hatred to children, that says to its women, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the battlefield? That drives out its artists and thinkers, that dreads the infinite potentialities of the human mind?

But we must hate with discrimination. Not long ago I heard some one say, "I don't care to read German literature now." That is not only silly, it is wrong. Now, more than ever before, we should study to appreciate the culture of those countries where fascism tries to stamp out culture. Goya is no less Goya, Cervantes is no less Cervantes, because Franco is in Madrid.

All over the civilized world people of culture are living in exile. As I go about your city I see in every street faces that bear the mark of European nationality, and the far more unmistakable marks of thought and mental sensibility. But let us be careful how we think of these exiles. They are destitute. They are homeless, they have been through great tribulation. How can they not appeal to our sense of compassion?

What about their appeal to our sense of gratitude? In a narrow sense they come to us destitute; but looking at it as a whole, they come to us loaded with riches, loaded with gifts. They are like those sultans in the Arabian Nights, who went about disguised as poor men seeking entertainment. And with a wave of the hand they could open a treasury.

In the history of culture every great blossoming has been preceded by a mixed marriage, by a cross fertilization. Fascism, driving the thinkers and the artists into exile, has done exactly this. It has arranged this cross fertilization and I believe from this scattering of cultures there will inevitably result a cultural renaissance; and that this in its turn will be a potent element in the overthrow of fascism. For history works like that. But only if it is a true and full cultural renaissance: not a surface flourish, but something that goes deeper, that is rooted in the life of the people, all the people. And it is because I am convinced of this that I hear with such uneasiness that the Federal Writers Project may be discontinued. For I look on the Writers Project as one of the strongest defenses of your country against fascism.

The pen is not mightier than the sword. But it is as mighty. The forces of reaction know this, wherever they are. Reaction does not like to see so many hands holding pens, so many books open; least of all when the hands are roughened with labor. I am not surprised that the Writers Project should be menaced. But whoever works against it works for fascism, exposes the United States to the blight that darkens over so much of Europe.

I brought you a greeting from my country's present. I would like to bring you also a greeting out of my country's past. I want to read you these few lines from a play by Ben Jonson—a play about a tyrant, a play that might be of the present day:

"Meantime, give orders that his books be burned.
It fits not such licentious things should live
To upbraid the age.
"If the age were good, they might.
Nor do they aught who use this cruelty
Of interdiction, and this rage of burning
But purchase to themselves rebuke and shame—
And to the writers an immortal name."

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER.

FWP's Americana

A guide to New York and the lives of thirty-five Southerners.

THERE is a kind of literary product that cannot be turned out by one man working alone. I do not mean dictionaries, of course, or encyclopedias, or history on a larger scale than Wells' or Durant's, but rather the compact, highly factual pieces of Americana that have come into our literature since the founding of the Federal Writers Project. Novelists, poets, and historians, with their various insights, can give us people and periods in large chunks, but it takes a dozen different talents to turn out books like the *New York City Guide* (Federal Writers Project, Random House, $2.50) and *These Are Our Lives* (FWP, University of North Carolina Press, $2). They combine the virtues of fiction, poetry, history, and a good Ph.D. monograph.

The *New York City Guide* is a companion volume to *New York Panorama,* published about a year ago. The first book was concerned mostly with the city's people, how they talk, think, act, and spend the hours outside the factories and offices. It was good anthropology. The *Guide*, however, deals more with the things of the city, the physical environment that molds the people's lives. It takes the five boroughs separately, then divides them according to the character of the sections. There are reasons for Hell's Kitchen and Kip's Bay, Union Square and Canarsie; they are given in short prefatory essays. The Project people were wise in using these areas, jagged and varying in size as they are, rather than depending on the neat gridiron layout of most of the city, which is convenient for traveling but meaningless for living. Once inside a section the book gives a paragraph or two on its important subdivisions—blocks, houses, parks. There is no banal routine of statues and curiosities, no rubbernecking, no garnishing of the exotic. Chinatown lives pretty much as most of Chelsea does.

The writing and the photography are fine. Of the staff that prepared the book only a few are well known, but the prose is up to

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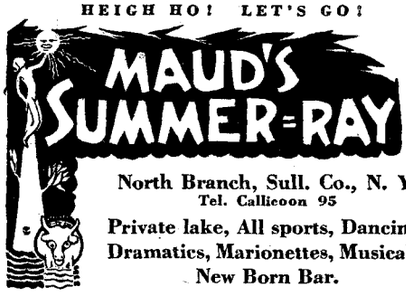

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the highest contemporary standards. To say that the book is "full of facts" would be almost insulting. If I were suddenly commissioned to a life in Madagascar, I think this book would remind me how it feels to walk home from NEW MASSES on a summer evening.

These Are Our Lives is another way of cutting across America. The title can be taken literally. The book is by people—factory workers, tenants, reliefers, even a landlord—in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Each one talks the story of his life; the writer prods and coaxes, maybe writes a little introduction, edits out the repetitiousness.

There are thirty-five pieces in the book, but the FWP has hundreds more on hand. Each person tells his story in as much detail as he chooses, following, not too rigidly, an outline that calls for information on Family, Income, Education, Attitude Toward, Occupation and Kind of Life, Politics, Religion, and Morals, Medical Needs, Diet, and Use of Time. These do not intrude on the story itself but are drawn out naturally in conversation. If the subject is reluctant, the investigator's instructions say he should not be pressed; reluctance itself and the reasons for it are valuable to understand.

You get more than a picture of the conditions of life of these people. You get from their own mouths and with very little self-consciousness all their contradictions and paradoxes, the little confusions that beset their minds. You learn the strength of opinion-forming machinery. You meet Negroes like Sam Bowers, who believes passionately in Roosevelt but insists on voting Republican because he also believes passionately in Lincoln. This is common enough, but in the context of the man's entire life you understand better what can be done about it, what ideas really appeal.

Done by competent researchers, who will balance their investigations to get the right group proportions, this method can be exceptionally valuable. Carl Sandburg showed, in *The People, Yes,* that popular language, even popular cliche, can be extended indefinitely and still remain fine reading. These extended newspaper interviews with common people get much the same effect as Sandburg's collection of folksay, and at the same time they illustrate far more detailed problems.

RICHARD H. ROVERE.

Old School Muckraker

The life of Ida M. Tarbell, reviewed by John Stuart.

IN THE memories of a now venerable generation of magazine readers and writers, Miss Tarbell must hold an exceptional if not affectionate place. Along with Lincoln Steffens and Ray Stannard Baker she bolted the genteel tradition of magazine journalism to create a periodical that in its criticism of business and political foulness implemented an entire movement of middle-class revolt.

It is hard to believe that Miss Tarbell, born

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in Pennsylvania four years before the Civil War, is still at her craft although considerably subdued since the days when *McClure's* sent her on those roving explorations into the wretched history of Standard Oil. She grew up in the rough and ambitious climate of a town that had struck oil. Her childhood recollections, as she records them here (*All in the Day's Work. An Autobiography,* The Macmillan Co., $3.50) are those of frenzied men each after a fortune, of oil derricks and oil exchanges. She remembers with a deep sense of pain how "the railroads and an outside group of refiners attempted to seize what men had created," how Standard Oil struck down its helpless competitors and engulfed the community with fear and hate.

Years later, after she had been among the first women to attend Allegheny College, had served on the editorial staff of the *Chautauquan,* and had lived in Paris studying the life of Madame Roland, her opportunity to delve into the history of Standard Oil came. S. S. McClure financed the study that took five years. She had already become skillful in research techniques in her books on Napoleon and Lincoln. But an investigation of the most brutal monopoly in the country—a monopoly that buried almost every incriminating document and source of information—seemed almost an impossible undertaking. The story of how she unearthed her evidence is in itself remarkable, and she tells it in a tone of adventure that makes the tale of a trip to the North Pole seem like a Hudson River boat excursion. The book was sensationally successful. Rockefeller forbade any reply to it. "Not a word. Not a word about that misguided woman," he warned.

If the radicals cheered the appearance of the history they had not reckoned with Miss Tarbell's conscience. The book itself was a by-product of the Big Stick days of the first Roosevelt. It expressed a revolt that had as its basis a tepid and aimless reformism. Miss Tarbell saw the activities of Standard Oil as violations of Christian ethics, a kind of corporate immorality. In her conception there was no animus against monopoly's vast power. "I was willing that they should combine and grow as big and rich as they could, but only by legitimate means." That marked the beginnings of Miss Tarbell's decline as a critical journalist. (It was also a central reason for the evaporation of the muckraking school.) Lincoln Steffens increased in stature when he discovered that theology and righteousness blunted his analytical powers. Miss Tarbell's promising growth was arrested when she permitted an ethical evaluation to overwhelm her social thinking.

The remainder of her literary output shows the poverty of her philosophy. She wrote a glowing life of Elbert Gary, because as chief of United States Steel he applied the Golden Rule in his plants. She found Owen D. Young a great industrial statesman. Frederick Taylor's system of industrial cooperation would solve the unfriendly relations between workers and their employers. These men were charming and natural in their personal relations. By inference, they were Christian gentlemen, devoted fathers and heavy contributors to local charities. The books on Gary and Young are terribly dull for the same reasons that the last third of Miss Tarbell's autobiography is washed out and replete with Sunday School homilies. It would be an act of kindness to forget this barren phase of Miss Tarbell's life. And one is strongly tempted to judge her history by tilting the scales in its favor until the reader encounters her observation after a half-hour interview with Mussolini: ". . . and when Mussolini accompanied me to the door and kissed my hand in the gallant Italian fashion I understood for the first time an unexpected phase of the man which makes him such a power in Italy. He might be—was, I believed—a fearful despot, but he had a dimple."

JOHN STUART.

Three Poets

New books by Paul Engle, Josephine Miles, Ben Belitt.

WHEN Paul Engle's *American Song* appeared in 1934, J. Donald Adams wrapped himself in the star-spangled banner and blew loud trumpets of praise in the Sunday *Times* book-review pages. The national oracle had arrived; an Iowa boy had picked up Whitman's torch. Fortunately, Engle didn't let this extravaganza go to his head, and when two years later he underscored some sour notes in the American song—poverty, corruption, and the general waste of capitalism—Mr. Adams quietly relegated his oracle to an inside page.

Now, in *Corn* (Doubleday-Doran, $2) Engle again evaluates his land, this time from the vantage point of the Rhodes Scholar returned, sick to death of the screeching of the dictators "and the black gun-butt beating on the door." So glad is he to be home, in fact, that America's own wounds, which he had begun to notice, now are wrapped in a gauze of rhapsody.

At his best he is another Frost, with simple straightforward images of prairie land and black furrows and fat corn. But for the most part he writes rhetoric rather than poetry—which is too bad because his sincere love of our free heritage is never in question. Puzzled by the fascist "persuasion of hung rope," he lets the wind blow through his hair and wonders what to do. "Against a wall of hate/it is no use to run." The result is a distrust of *all* fighting cohesion: the typical liberal confusion of the organized struggle-against-fascism with fascism itself: Scylla and Charybdis and the whirlpool between.

Halfway thinking makes halfway art, our ivory-towerists to the contrary, and Engle's patriotism—lacking a scalpel into America's organic problems—becomes largely topographical. Hence his prosy lines, unimaginative rhythm, and inability to perform the basic myth-making functions of the poet.

One should note that the shorter poems,

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especially "Farmer," a sensitive, cleanly drawn lyric, are much the best of Engle's work. And today, when defense of American democracy has more meaning than ever before, it is to be hoped that Engle's very real love for his homeland will be the soil for further growth both in his thinking and in his art.

In contrast, Josephine Miles' *Lines At Intersection* (The Macmillan Co., $1.60) hasn't a suggestion of a drumbeat in it. Miss Miles doesn't see any visions—poetical, political, or patriotic. She sees what she sees. Reading her is like walking down Fifth Avenue on a sunny day: the dazzling shop windows, the Shavian girl in the roadster, a cat at the curb. Her versification is tailored, swift, clean cut, and witty. But it is a surface poetry, inorganic if you will, lacking passion, seldom digging deep, and viewing people from the outside.

This gives her something in common with the imagists, but she has a better ear than most of these, and realizes that poetry is more than mere word painting. Occasionally, her refreshing and original diction becomes mannered with its constant omission of subjects of verbs: "That's another, said to his girl . . ." and "Audience watches hit the bat . . ." But usually she lays down a clean bunt and slides into first without mussing a curl. I like particularly "Cat," "Personification" (a very self-possessed young lady), and the truly qualitative *Analysis of Compound:*

What would you think to call the texture of water?
Sitting with your feet swinging over it,
High with your hands clinging over it,
What would you say was water?

Ben Belitt's *The Five-Fold Mesh* (Knopf, $2) was, to this reviewer, the most rewarding of these three books. Here is a craftsman, adroit in weaving cadence and image into a seamless unity, with a serious purpose that makes one a little impatient with Miss Miles' tinkling shower, and brings into sharp relief the technical cautiousness of Engle.

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the personal to the social to the personal-in-the-social. Such a lyric as "John Keats, Surgeon," with its analysis of the ever unassuaged creative process, is a key to Belitt's present stage of development. It is a theme repeated in Part 3 of "Many Cradles: Personal Legend" and reveals a poet who is still a philosophical idealist, distrusting the "dissembling sense,/the fine and five-fold mesh," conceiving of art as a sort of laceration-process: ". . . loose the inward wound to bleed afresh." Belitt is largely concerned with *his* relation to the world and it is significant, I think, that his better poems—like the sympathetic "Charwoman" whose "lumped form like *a sponge . . .*" *brings to mind* "*the world's* waste scanted to a personal sin . . ." and the fine "Battery Park: High Noon"—are those in which he breaks through this preoccupation.

Most of the earlier pieces are weak, archaic in spots, a little arty, and occasionally mere carving-on-a-seashell. But here Belitt was learning his job and when he hits his stride in "Battery Park: High Noon," one forgives the finger exercises. His debts are enormous:

Out of some subway scuttle, cell or loft
A bedlamite speeds to thy parapets,
Tilting there momently, shrill shirt ballooning,
A jest falls from the speechless caravan.

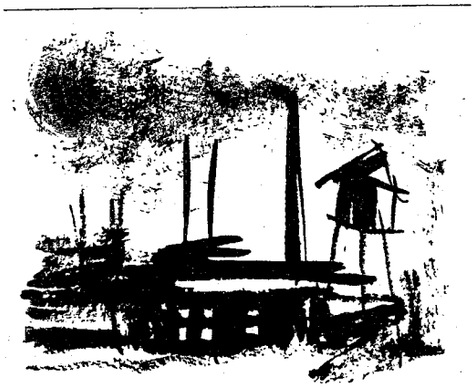
Compute the season out of height and heat:
Cubes in the poised shaft dwindle; tackle moves;
Descending diners paddle into the grooves
And burst from bolts and belts upon the street.

The first quatrain is from Crane's "To Brooklyn Bridge," the second is Belitt's. The similarity of style is amazing but it is not plagiarism. Every great poet has been a mint from which the poetic coins of a decade were struck. To ignore—on the grounds of a labored originality—an artistic idiom that has become social is to be a Luddite machine-wrecker.

True, he has not sufficiently expressed *man's* relation to the machine, the striving of humanity. The future for him is not so much humanly achieved as chemically reduced: "the ceaseless diamond." Yet, at his best he sings and his singing is worth listening to:

Follow the loll of smoke, fallow over water,
The expense of power in retentive stone,
Where the barge takes the ripple with an organ tone—
Over water, over roof, over catchpenny green,
Into time-to-come and what-has-been.

SIDNEY ALEXANDER.



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Peace Powers at the Fair

The pavilions of France, England, Czechoslovakia, and Sweden at the World of Tomorrow. The Middle Way and Czech resistance.

EVERYONE is selling something at the Fair. All the nations are selling travel and the Soviet Union socialism as well. Britain and France have large buildings showing their export products, tourist charms, and their glorious past, but there is only an evasive picture of how the French and British people live. Walter Lippmann, who scooped me on these pavilions, thinks this is a virtue. "They are exhibiting their social reforms, showing not, as in some of the pavilions, that all problems are solved, but how much progress has been made in solving them." Walter is satisfied with practically nothing these days. He came away from the British exhibit "thinking that only the strong can be so modest and only the honest heart can be so quiet."

France and Britain have disorderly, rambling buildings, as puzzling in arrangement as the institutions of the countries. The confusion is sharpest in the circulation problem which has been solved logically in the Russian, Swedish, and Czech pavilions. No itinerary presents itself once you are past the Abyssinian lions of Britain or the shelflike formal garden that serves as foyer for France. You wander like an innocent in a museum, confronted with many marvels but unable to fit them together. The industries boast their prowess, the arts are there, and most of all there are glorious traditions. Britain has huge halls of heraldic shields, genealogies, crown jewels, castles, and little suggestion that twentieth century people are alive amidst these hoary wonders. What interest that might have been aroused by an air-raid shelter, a diorama of Brighton on a Bank Holiday, an interior of a worker's house in Birmingham, or even a working replica of a modest pub, Britain has not cared to arouse. But for things like the racing car that did 365 miles an hour on the Bonneville Salt Flats, and the beautiful brass screw of a liner, this might be Good Albert's Crystal Palace redesigned by the architect of the Penguin Pool at the Kensington Zoo. There is, of course, the Magna Carta, but school kids cannot read medieval Latin, and there is precious little evidence of effort to bring the document up to date.

French taste prevails in the white plaster building overlooking the Fountain of Nations. The pavilion is definitely not designed by Le Corbusier, repeating the ignorant omission of Frank Lloyd Wright from the American buildings. The layout is as confusing as Pennsylvania Station. The museum air of the structure is underlined by replicas of French provincial interiors, peasant costumes hanging in wall cases, and bits of romanesque architecture thrown about here and there.

In two distinct manners, the architecture of the Swedish and Soviet pavilions is brilliantly true to the material used, the nature of the Fair, and the intentions of the exhibits. Both are built around a central open space, with the buildings proper enclosing the visitor from the cockeyed World of Tomorrow. The pavilion of the USSR is massive and rectangular, faithful to the marble material. Most of the Fair's structures are cardboard parodies of stone masses, basically uneasy to the subconscious. Sweden has a modest one-story pavilion surrounding one of the loveliest gardens I have ever seen. The encircling arcade is roofed with great centrilevered slabs of natural finished spruce, resembling tilted airplane wings with white struts joining the ground. Under this, semi-attached, screenlike rooms, striped awnings, a tented restaurant, and one unit of solid white plaster construction give the pavilion an apt air of gay impermanence, of a sunny Northern bazaar.

The garden is cunningly informal with flowers, untrimmed shrubbery, and thin white birches scattered around a green pool with a tinkling glass fountain. The Swedish patio is paved with white flagstones, many of them bearing in intaglio names and trademarks of Swedish firms which have subscribed to the cost of the inexpensive building. This subjugation of commercialism is also noticeable in the comfortable wood and wicker chairs generously placed in the garden. Instead of putting one of these chairs in a glass case, you are allowed to sit on it and note on a little tag the name of the maker, G. A. Berg of Stockholm. Strindberg said that yellow is the color of joy. The architects have allowed nature's own greens, yellows, and whites to set the key for the color harmonies of yellow and white striped awning, green bronze statuary, and for the backing of the photomontages celebrating Sweden's Middle Way. The Swedes have a beguiling presentation of their form of government. The awning arcade, based on the theme of large photo portraits of the people—forester, industrial worker, farmer, mother, and premier—in recognition of the fact that people are at least as interesting as medieval heraldry. There are real, red-cheeked Swedish blondes in the garden, and an outdoor bar with reasonable prices for a drink. If there had been a swimming pool in the center with some of these girls disporting themselves, Billy Rose would be running a strip show in the Amusement Area. Sitting in this garden in the late afternoon sun is one of the Fair's pleasures, unspoiled even by the

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sight over the low Swedish roof of some of the confectioner's cakes housing the neighboring industrial exhibits.

The Czech pavilion, next door to Soviet Russia, was uncompleted when Hitler raised his arm in Hradcany Castle in Prague, *whose spires a thousand years ago rose in God's praise.* The building has been opened and will be maintained by friends of Czech democracy. It is a boxlike, white structure, divided in the interior by a simple foyer, and a large main room with a staircase to a rear balcony, semicircular like an apse, with stained glass windows describing the Bata shoe industry. The circulation is rudimentary and effective; from the balcony you exit to an outside stairway. A pre-Hitler quotation appears on the facade: *"After the tempest of wrath has passed the rule of thy country will return to thee O Czech people"—Comenius.* Much of the hall is ruefully bare because the Nazis stole the exhibits while they were waiting to be shipped. The foyer has several impressive murals, in a powerful Slavic decorative manner, including a mosaic showing the churches of Prague. One bare wall has been furnished with a rousing statement of fight against Hitler's invasion and the building as a whole does not let the visitor forget the lesson symbolized in its half-finished state. People comment about this exhibit in voluntary exclamations of indignation, as voluble as they are silent in France and England's displays. The Soviet pavilion is evidence of victory; this of treason and defeat. Americans are deeply stirred by these neighboring houses in the World of Tomorrow.

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Each and every one of us in my agency are 100 percent behind the program of such organizations as the Workers Alliance. We know that people on WPA and relief are there through no fault of their own—*in spite of the Woodrum committee!*

We have learned to get together. Struggles for organization by the people we serve has taught us a few primary lessons. Social workers today are organized too. But organization alone was not enough for us. We learned the necessity of political action. You can't do your job in our field of work unless there is the money to do it with. This single hard fisted fact has taught us the necessity for political action.

I think it was *New Masses* perhaps more than any other single factor that brought me to that conclusion. I have actually grown to love *New Masses.*

New Masses has taken the haze off the windshield and put clear markers on the road.

We are not driving around the traffic circle any more. We social workers know where we are going!

Your editors have turned out an increasingly better and highly exciting magazine in the last few months, and this is why I am sending you $4.50 for renewal of my 52 weeks subscription right now. I am not taking any chances on not getting *New Masses every single week of the year.*

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were the days of headache and heartache. Everything was going out and nothing coming in. Then the commercial program stepped in, and put radio on a paying basis. The result is the radio of today, still not perfect, perhaps, but an incomparable improvement.

The reason for the change from the old to the new is seldom acknowledged. The credit seems to have fallen almost everywhere but in the place it belongs. Indirectly, radio owes its huge strides to the drama, the most popular form of air entertainment. It was the possibilities of drama that encouraged the commercial sponsor to undertake air advertising. But directly, the plaudits go to the imaginative and inventive genius of the radio technicians that made these dramatic realities possible—the sound men. Like the unknown versatile studio actor, these creative minds also belong to radio's unsung heroes.

Originally there was little to attract the interest of professional writers to the medium of radio. The limitations of studio technique provided small area for the display of literary talents. No writer could slant his scripts indefinitely to the sound of a slamming door or a clanging telephone bell—about the only sound effects originally available. As a result, variety in sound became a positive necessity, and radio did the best it could by drawing upon those stage hands who had worked such slender sound effects as the theater then possessed.

This was the beginning. Time and experience gradually broadened sound resources, until today a good sound technician can produce almost any effect but moonlight on Lake Kokomo. He can give you Lake Kokomo all right, but he's waiting for Einstein to figure out the moonlight angle. You may not be aware of it, but as many as one hundred sound effects may go into a half-hour's show. These devices give the program punch, and justify

Painting by Grischa Metlay (Delphic Studios)

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the existence of a show like *Gang Busters*—something the writing doesn't do.

Many sound effects must come in on a split second. For example, the sound man can't come through with a pistol shot three seconds after the groans of Public Enemy No. 1. The demands of some directors are fantastic, but the sound man must satisfy them, and as a rule he does. Anyone who has attended participating programs can't have missed the constant activity of the sound men. One is slamming a door, another is scratching in a gravel pit, and then both grab their blank cartridge guns and fill the studio with deafening explosions. Every minute of script reading is calling for those little touches that lend realism to radio drama.

Maurice Brachhauser, N. R. Kelly, Harry Saz, C. J. Walter of the National Broadcasting Co., Jimmy Rogan, Ray Kramer, Walter Peirson, Eddie Kramer, Walter McDonald of the Columbia networks, and Fritz Streit of Mutual; these are only a few of the boys that step up your evening's entertainment. There are many more, and they are all expert technicians.

The next time you go to the movies, close your eyes and listen. You'll find the screen's sound effects don't compare with radio technique. The radio technicians deserve the credit —and more. JOHN VERNON.

A Kazakh Chapayev

A film of revolution in Central Asia and an anti-Nazi movie from Britain

THE introductory title to *Amangeldy,* the Cameo's new Soviet picture, contains the offhand remark that the picture's setting, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, is almost as large as Europe. The overthrow of Czardom here was led by Amangeldy Imanov, a Kazakh nomad who was killed in a skirmish with Kolchak's counter-revolutionists in 1919. Director Moissaye Levin and his cameramen achieve an epic quality in this tale of revolution in the vast rolling steppes, among the great peaks of the Pamirs, a realistic picture of the life of the Kazakhs which reminds you of the documentary character of Pudovkin's *Storm Over Asia.*

In the period from 1916 to his death Amangeldy, a shrewd, hardy fellow, germinated the legends that have become attached to his memory in Soviet folklore—how his unarmed band seized rifles from the White troops, how he sang and danced, and talked like Lenin before he knew of Bolshevism. In the playing of Elubai Umurzakov, People's Artist, the great leader is made to fit his land and people, as though there were no acting involved. When Czardom appeared in the grasslands under the guise of Kerensky's Provisional Government, Amangeldy was not fooled by the democratic pretense of the White agents. He led his people against the landlords just as vigorously, although his band was infested with spies. Before he died the Kazakhs were united

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and they carried their revolution through to victory.

Reflecting the encouragement of indigenous cultures among the Soviet peoples, the film is completely sensitive to the Kazakh culture, with the finest photography of any recent Soviet movie. Amangeldy's dashing cavalry sweeping over the steppes is excitingly portrayed, and the musical score of the picture is made for an Eastern string orchestra, a superb folk accompaniment. *Amangeldy* falls little short of Chapayev, and that is enough to recommend it to you.

BRITAIN'S "NAZI SPY"

On top of the *Squalus, Thetis,* and *Phenix* submarine disasters the new English film at the Music Hall, *Clouds Over Europe,* concerns the mysterious disappearances of English, French, Russian, and American aircraft during test flights. Ralph Richardson of the British Foreign Office, and Lawrence Olivier, the test pilot, suspect a certain foreign power, which you are left to deduct from the nationality of the missing planes and the Germanic accents of the enemy plotters. This is a new post-Munich note in English propaganda films. Although the picture doesn't name names like *Confessions of a Nazi Spy,* and hence does not have its positive value, it is an unmistakable indication that the winds are blowing against appeasement in the British Foreign Office, which closely supervises British films.

The Nazis, it seems, have perfected a ray capable of cutting the motors and radio of the test ships. The ray is operated from an innocent salvage vessel offshore. When the plane comes down the ship picks it up with a crane, imprisons the crew, and sends on to Germany the new and secret device being tested. Richardson and Olivier unravel the mystery in a highly entertaining manner, the first-named actor rapidly claiming first place among English comedy players. The political weight of the picture is also helped by the absence of any disgusting pleading for the empire, a note that reached gutter bottom in *The Sun Never Sets* that ran in the Rockefeller Crown Colony at Radio City last week. This number was confected in Hollywood where Kipling is a piker. The picture also had a vague reference to Nazi warmaking, rendered into complete nonsense by the Hollywood lackeys of empire. The villain is one Dr. Zurof who travels around the African veldt in a chromium cocktail lounge, studying ant life through an eyepiece. But, gee whiz, he is just play-acting because he is really a munitions magnate with a powerful radio hidden deep in a mine where he broadcasts nightly to the world. Strikes, demonstrations, riots, and mutterings break out all over the world and the Foreign Office sends Basil Rathbone in short pants and his loudmouthed brother, Doug Fairbanks Jr. down to the Gold Coast to save the peace. How they did it makes for one of the lousiest evenings I ever spent in a movie theater.

JAMES DUGAN.

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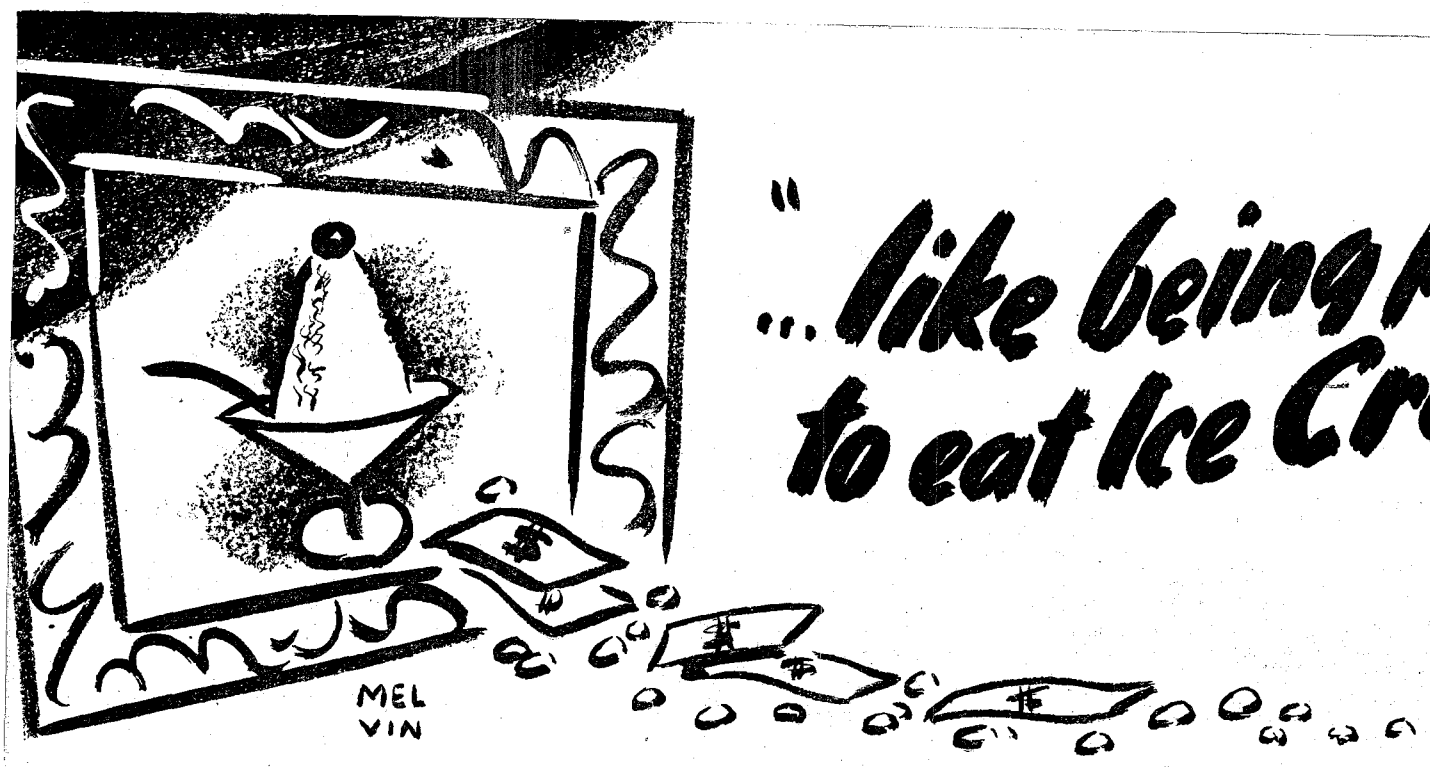

"...like being paid to eat Ice Cream

Here's a contest we know New Masses readers will enjoy entering. In addition to the satisfaction derived from building New Masses circulation (frankly, the object is to obtain 10,000 new readers by Labor Day), you may share in $200.00 in cash prizes.

WIN WITH A SLOGAN

NEW MASSES wants a smashing slogan to describe the magazine that champions progress and democracy. NEW MASSES will pay $200.00 in eleven (11) cash prizes to get the slogans. NEW MASSES will pay ten dollars a week for ten weeks for the best weekly slogan with a grand prize of $100.00 for the best of all.

We believe that this contest offers an exciting way to create dramatic interest in our campaign to spread NEW MASSES to thousands of progressive men and women who ought to be reading it.

Past participation of our readers in NM circulation drives amply convinces us that every NM reader is an NM plugger. If this means you, hop on the bandwagon, enter the contest now, and win new readers for NEW MASSES and a prize for yourself by translating your regard for NM into a punchy slogan for NEW MASSES and a cash prize for you.

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The important thing to remember as you talk to your friends is that the slogan must be a thrilling, hard-hitting sales talk for NEW MASSES in not more than five words.

Reach for a pencil. Start making lists of everybody you know, getting a buck or more from them for a sub, and then get them to enter the contest too. It's really a sort of a giant Build NEW MASSES chain letter idea, isn't it?

It's like being paid to eat ice cream—you can have a lot of fun, polish your persuasive power, be creative for NEW MASSES, win a cash prize, and most important of all, *jump* NEW MASSES *circulation 10,000 or more by Labor Day!*

So get out your pencil and paper and start competing—

TODAY!

HERE ARE THE RULES

1. Everyone but NM staff members and their relatives is eligible.
2. The contest opens June 22 and closes September 4 (Labor Day).
3. Slogans must not exceed five words but may be less.
4. Here's how to qualify for the contest: Go to your friends, relatives, and professional acquaintances and convince them to become regular NEW MASSES readers. While you are showing them the magazine and talking about its fine points you will find yourself expressing its qualities in terms your listeners are interested in. This is what will make up the grand prize slogan—a sharp, terse, and dramatic description of the usefulness of the magazine to progressive people.

   For every $1 twelve-week trial subscription you secure you may submit one slogan.

   For every $2.50 *six-month* subscription you may submit two slogans.

   For every $4.50 yearly subscription you may submit three slogans.

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   If you are not a subscriber now you may enter the contest by sendin in your own yearly subscriptio ($4.50). If you are a subscriber, yo may enter the contest merely by ex tending the life of your own currer subscription for one year ($4.50).
5. The first contest winner will be an nounced in the issue of NEW MASSE that appears July 6. In that issue an in each of the next nine issues we wi reprint the winning slogan and awar the weekly prize of $10.00. One mont after the closing date of the contes we will announce the winner of th grand prize of $100.00.
6. All slogans submitted, whether wi ners or not, become the property o NEW MASSES, and cannot be returne In the events of a tie for weekly o grand prize the full amount of th prize will be awarded to each tyin contestant.
7. Judges of the contest will be thre editors of NEW MASSES—Joseph Nortl A. B. Magil, Samuel Sillen. Thei decisions are final.

Build New Masses Slogan Contest JUNE 27, 193

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